

NOIR™

FEATURING:
MISS FURY
THE BLACK SPARROW



GISCHLER
MUTTI

DYNAMITE

GUEST
STARRING

THE Shadow

ORIEGO
Kyle Ritter



NOIR™



NOIR™

THE MOHAWK TEMPLAR

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AND MICHAEL USLAN**

THE SHADOW CREATED BY
WALTER B. GIBSON

This volume collects issues 1-5 of
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Bad Girls Make for Good Comics

When Nick Barrucci offered to let me write an arc of *The Shadow*, I jumped at the opportunity. I mean this was a cool, iconic pulp hero. I could not wait to put Lamont Cranston and his hat-wearing alter ego through their paces. I knew instinctively I would need a good villain. I wanted somebody who would be a match not only for The Shadow but for Cranston. I wanted to throw some sexual tension (and . . . well some actual sex) in there too. So I came up with the beautiful and dangerous Black Sparrow!

That sounded good and pulpy, right? I described the cool costume I wanted, and the very first drawing of her was the #10 cover by Alex Ross. Alex Ross! She looked great! And that cover ended up being the cover for the trade as well. So we had an awesome character that looked fabulous and was totally kicking ass in the pages of *The Shadow*.

About that time the *Miss Fury* comic hit, helmed by the talented Rob Williams. The protagonist was . . . *drum roll* . . . a sexy, dangerous woman! While Miss Fury and Black Sparrow are different in some ways, they could certainly have belonged to the same sorority. Cut from the same cloth, a more manic and less suicidal *Thelma & Louise*. I said to Joe Rybandt, "Hey, we should get these two ladies together."

Possibly I am paraphrasing a tad, but my memory is that the pitch was that straight forward. Joe immediately saw the potential, and pretty soon I put on my thinking cap (i.e. drinking a beer) to come up with an adventure that suited these two daring babes. (Knowing too well that if I called them "babes" they would punch me in the groin.)

What followed developed into "The Mohawk Templar," an *Indiana Jones*-style adventure with a noir vibe. I wanted swashbuckling, but I also wanted deceit and betrayal and the very strong understanding that these ladies were just as capable of stabbing you in the back as they were likely to save the day. This isn't Superman or Captain America's world. This is *NOIR*, baby.

So, five issues later, here we are. Miss Fury lives on in Rob's excellent series, and my sincere hope is that Black Sparrow shows herself again soon. Fingers crossed.

Read on. Enjoy.

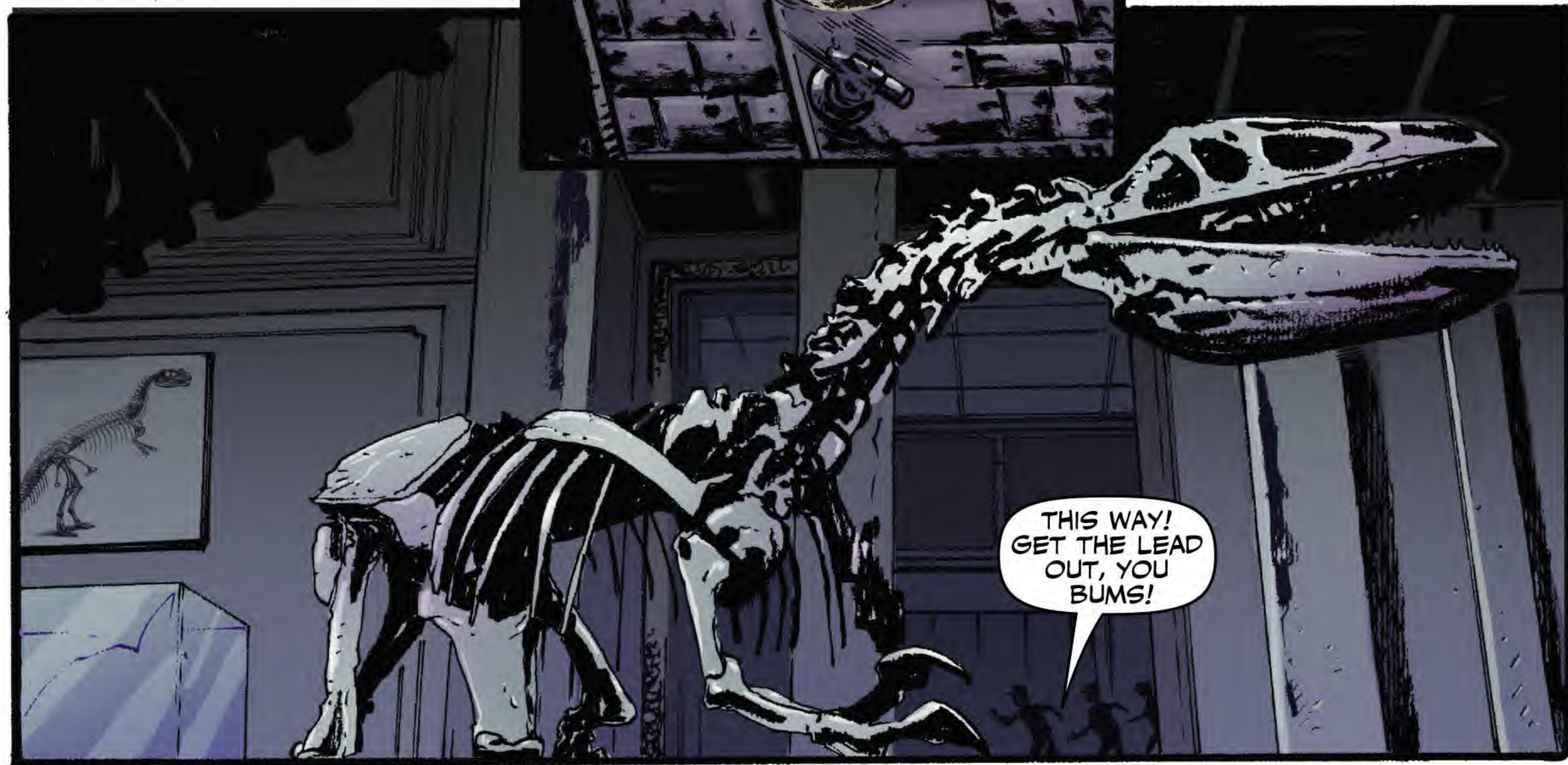
Victor Gischler
February 13, 2014



ISSUE 1



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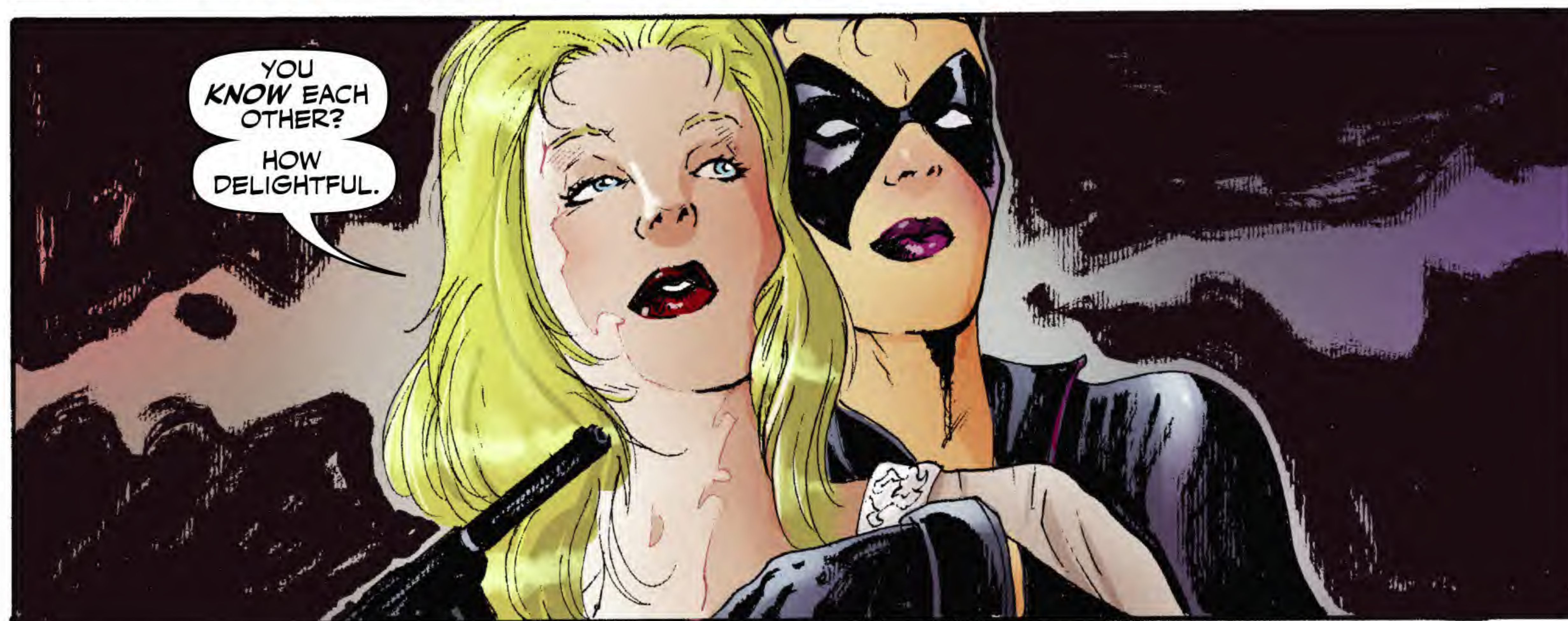
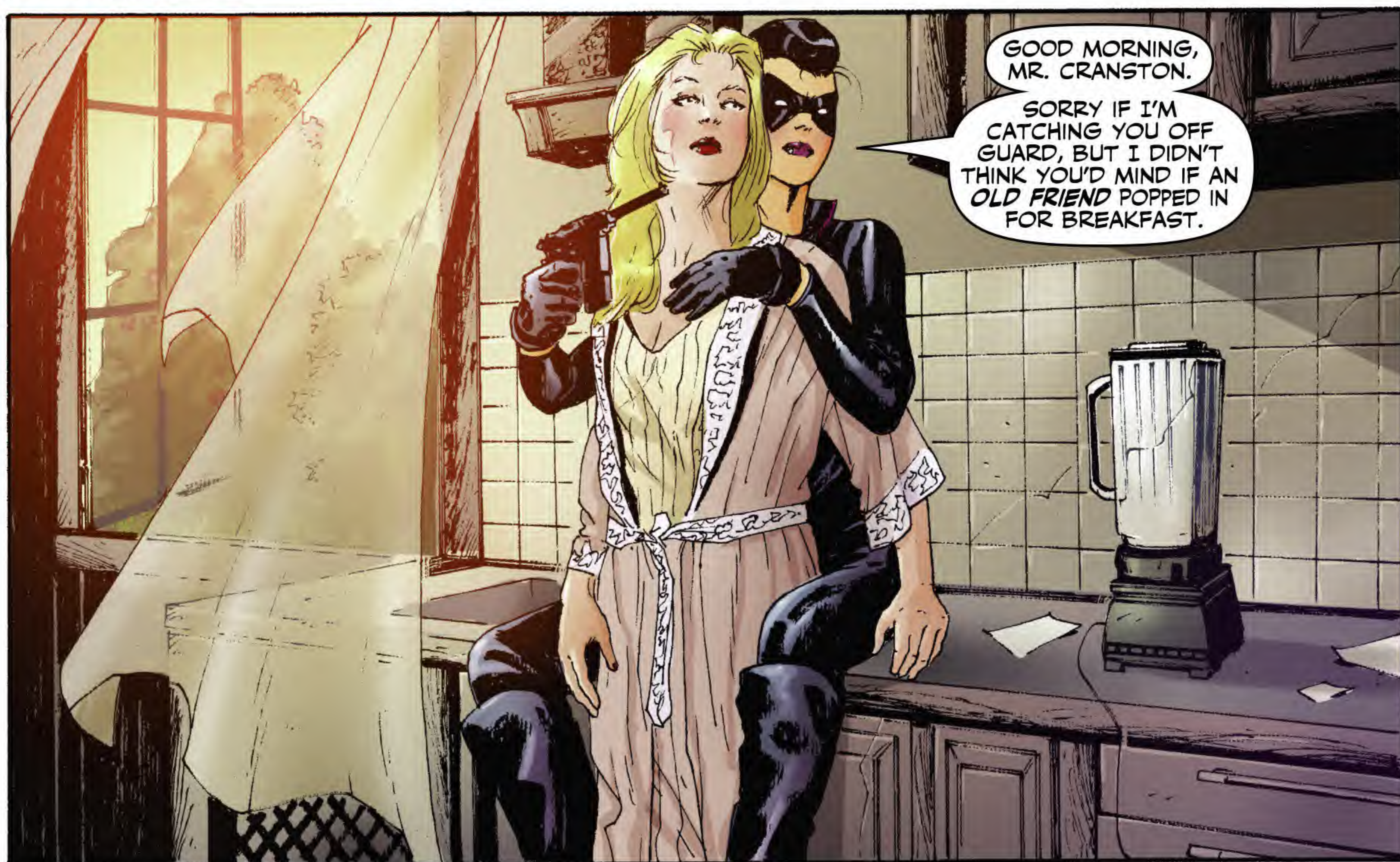


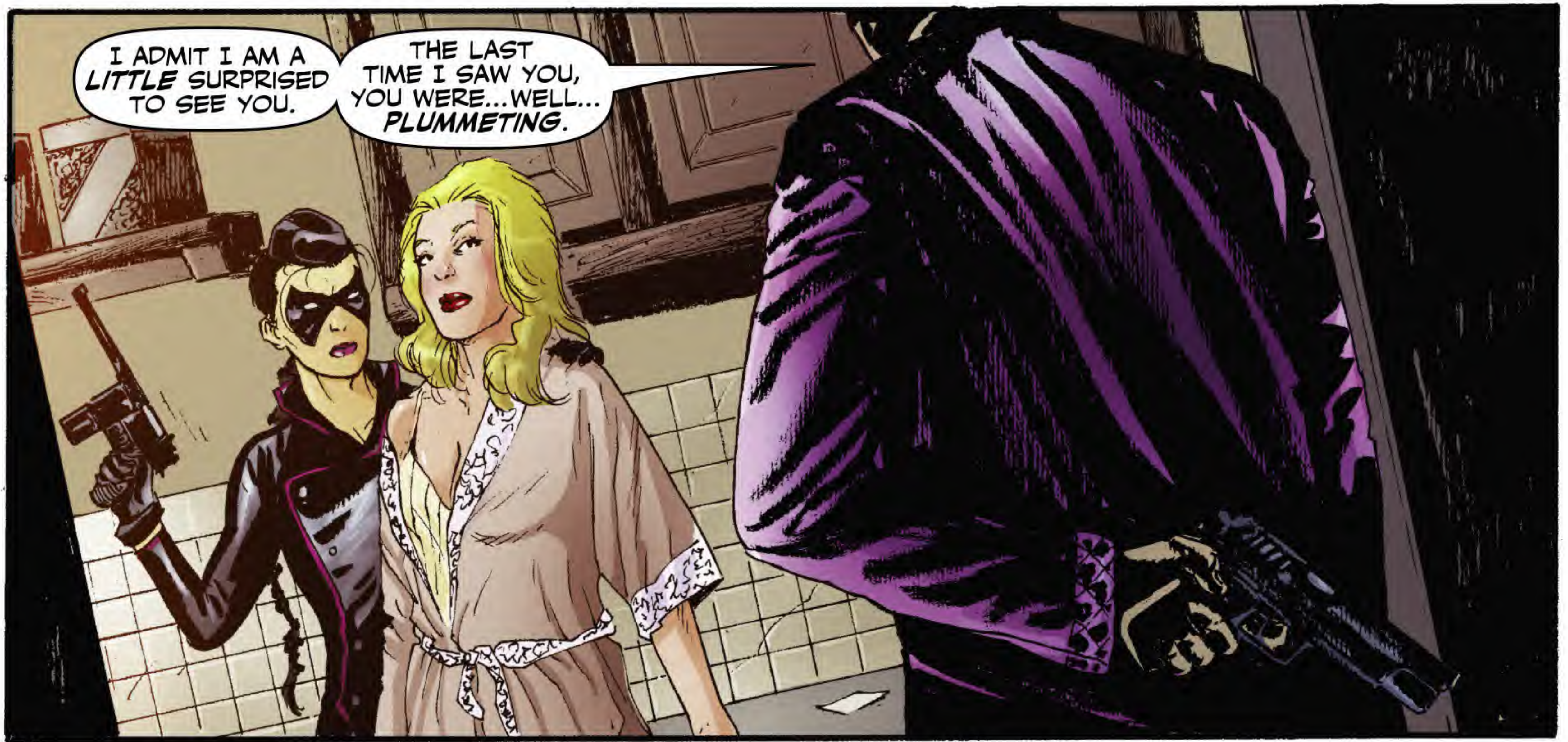
THIS WAY!
GET THE LEAD
OUT, YOU
BUMS!



COME ON!
THE MOHAWK
EXHIBIT!







I ADMIT I AM A
LITTLE SURPRISED
TO SEE YOU.

THE LAST
TIME I SAW YOU,
YOU WERE...WELL...
PLUMMETING.



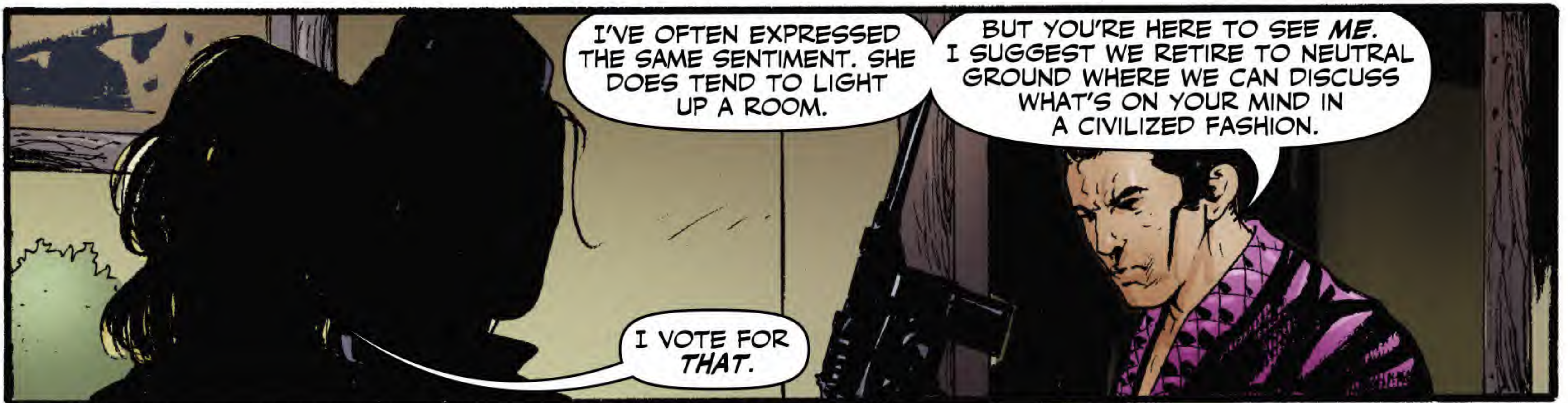
YOU PUSH ME OFF
A TOWER. I TOSS YOU
FROM AN AIRPLANE.

HAZARDS OF
OUR PROFESSION,
YES?

SEEMS I'M
NOT STRICTLY
NEEDED FOR THIS
CONVERSATION SO
MAYBE I'LL JUST
TODDLE OFF
AND -



BUT IT
WOULDN'T BE
A PARTY WITHOUT
YOU, BRIGHT
EYES.



I'VE OFTEN EXPRESSED
THE SAME SENTIMENT. SHE
DOES TEND TO LIGHT
UP A ROOM.

BUT YOU'RE HERE TO SEE **ME**.
I SUGGEST WE RETIRE TO NEUTRAL
GROUND WHERE WE CAN DISCUSS
WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND IN
A CIVILIZED FASHION.

I VOTE FOR
THAT.



VERY WELL.

NAME
THE TIME AND
PLACE.

"IT WAS WHILE CLINGING
TO A GARGOYLE IN THE
FOG THAT I BEGAN TO
PLAN MY BRUTAL, VIOLENT
REVENGE UPON YOU."



VIOLENT REVENGE, EH? MIND IF WE HAVE A *DRINK* FIRST?

LOU, HOW ABOUT A BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE? TWO GLASSES. BRING IT TO MY USUAL TABLE.

YES, MR. CRANSTON.



DON'T FRET, YOU BAD MAN. MY ANGER SUBSIDED AS SOON AS MY FEET WERE ON SOLID GROUND AGAIN.

AS I SAID BEFORE, THESE THINGS HAPPEN IN OUR LINE OF WORK.

YOU'VE *PLENTY* TO ANSWER FOR, MAJOR, BUT I'LL RESTRAIN MYSELF FOR THE MOMENT. I'LL ADMIT I'M INTRIGUED.



CALL ME *ESMERALDA*. I RESIGNED MY COMMISSION WITH THE SOCIALISTS IN FAVOR OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.



OBVIOUSLY YOU THINK I CAN BE OF SOME *USE* TO YOU. *SOCIAL* CALLS SELDOM COME THROUGH MY KITCHEN WINDOW.

IT SEEMED THE MOST EXPEDIENT WAY. AND YES, YOU - OR PERHAPS YOUR *ALTER EGO* - CAN HELP.

MAYBE YOU'VE READ ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY BREAK-IN. THAT WAS *ME*, I'M AFRAID.



YOU CONFESS? VERY WELL. WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME QUIETLY OR DO YOU PREFER *HANDCUFFS*?



REALLY, DARLING, WE CAN DISCUSS *ROLEPLAY* LATER.

RIGHT NOW... A STORY.

"HIS NAME WAS GUSTAV ARGUS AND HE WAS KNOWN TO THE LEGITIMATE WORLD AS AN IMPORTER AND EXPORTER."

"EVERYONE ELSE KNEW HIM AS A BLACK MARKET DEALER OF STOLEN ANTIQUITIES AND RARE CURIOSITIES."

"HE SUB-CONTRACTED THE MOON STONE JOB OUT TO ME. AN EASY OPPORTUNITY FOR QUICK CASH."

ONCE YOU HAVE THE STONE, WE'LL MEET, AND I'LL PAY YOU. I BELIEVE TEN THOUSAND WAS YOUR PRICE?

I SAID TWENTY. IN CASH. AND WORTH EVERY PENNY.

"AS YOU ALREADY KNOW, THE CAPER CAME OFF WITH LITTLE TROUBLE."

"I RETIRED TO MY HOTEL SUITE TO BASK IN MY ACCOMPLISHMENT..."

"...AND FOUND A MESSAGE WAITING."

Do the Moonstone to Argus will pay you triple for it. Wait to be contacted. F.

"I'LL ADMIT I LET GREED GET THE BETTER OF ME."

"I SKIPPED MY MEETING WITH ARGUS. I HAD THE MOON STONE AND COULD FIND HIM AGAIN IF I WISHED. SIMPLE ENOUGH TO MAKE UP SOME EXCUSE.

"I WAS MORE INTERESTED IN THE MYSTERIOUS NOTE WRITER, SO I DID AS I WAS INSTRUCTED, AND WAITED TO BE CONTACTED.

"AND WAITED..."

"I WAITED TOO LONG. ARGUS'S MEN FOUND ME.

KRASH

"I'M A CAREFUL WOMAN AND HAD CHECKED INTO THE HOTEL UNDER A FALSE NAME.

"BUT A LADY CAN NEVER BE TOO CAREFUL, I GUESS.

KAPOW

KAPOW

KAP

KAPOW



"THEY WERE GOOD ENOUGH TO CATCH ME OFF GUARD."



"NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO LIVE THROUGH IT."



"BUT WITH THEIR LIVES, THEY PURCHASED THE SECONDS NEEDED FOR THE THIRD MAN TO SLIP AWAY WITH THE MOON STONE."



"NOBODY STEALS FROM THE BLACK SPARROW, SO I PLOTTED MY RETALIATION. BUT I WAS IN A STRANGE CITY. I NEEDED HELP."

"I NEEDED THE SHADOW."

SO... TO RECAP...



A SHADY CHARACTER HIRES YOU TO **STEAL** THE MOON STONE. YOU THEN **DOUBLE-CROSS** HIM. THEN THEY GET THE DROP ON YOU AND STEAL IT BACK.

AND **NOW** YOU'RE ASKING FOR HELP.

FROM SOMEBODY WHO'S ALREADY TRIED TO **KILL** YOU ONCE.

DID I LEAVE ANYTHING OUT?



JUST THIS.

ALL I WANT IS WHAT I STOLE FAIR AND SQUARE.

BUT **ARGUS** HAS A NETWORK OF THIEVES AND SMUGGLERS ALL UP AND DOWN THE EAST COAST. YOU TURN A BLIND EYE TO **MY** MINOR INDISCRETIONS, AND I SERVE **HIM** AND HIS OPERATION UP ON A SILVER PLATTER.



FOR A LONG TIME NOW I'VE BEEN **TWO** MEN.

WELL, ONE MAN AND ONE **SHADOW** OF A MAN.

TOO OFTEN PEOPLE THINK THEY NEED THE ONE WHEN THEY REALLY NEED THE OTHER.



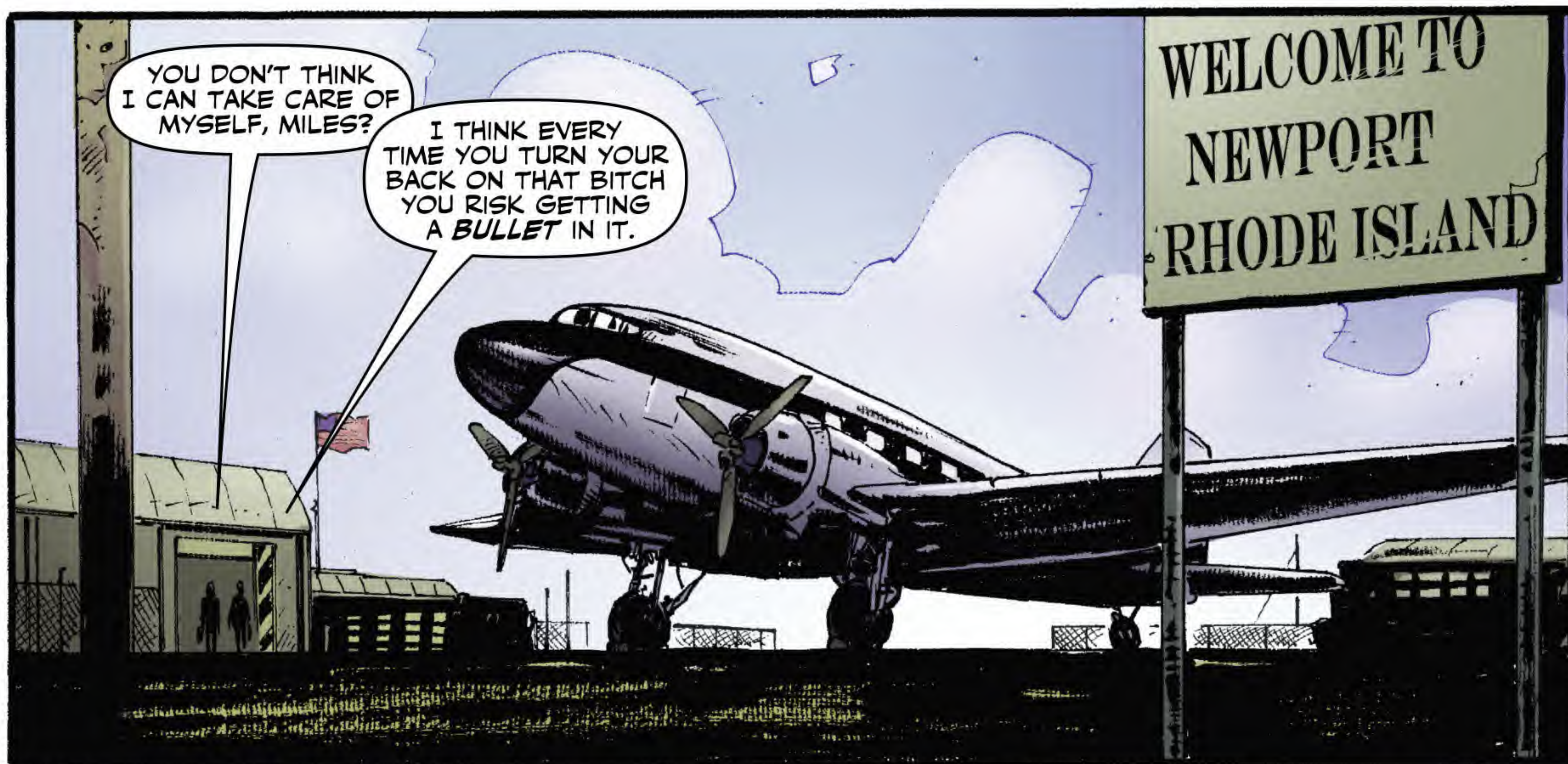
THE BUREAUCRATS OF NEW YORK KNOW EVERYTHING REALLY. YOU JUST NEED TO KNOW WHICH ONE TO ASK. AND THE CLOUT TO GET AN ANSWER.

AFTER **ESMERALDA** GAVE ME THE NAME OF THE YACHT, THE REST WAS EASY.

YES, I HAVE THE MANIFEST AND LOG FOR THE **THALIA** RIGHT HERE. SET SAIL FOR **NEWPORT** THIS MORNING.

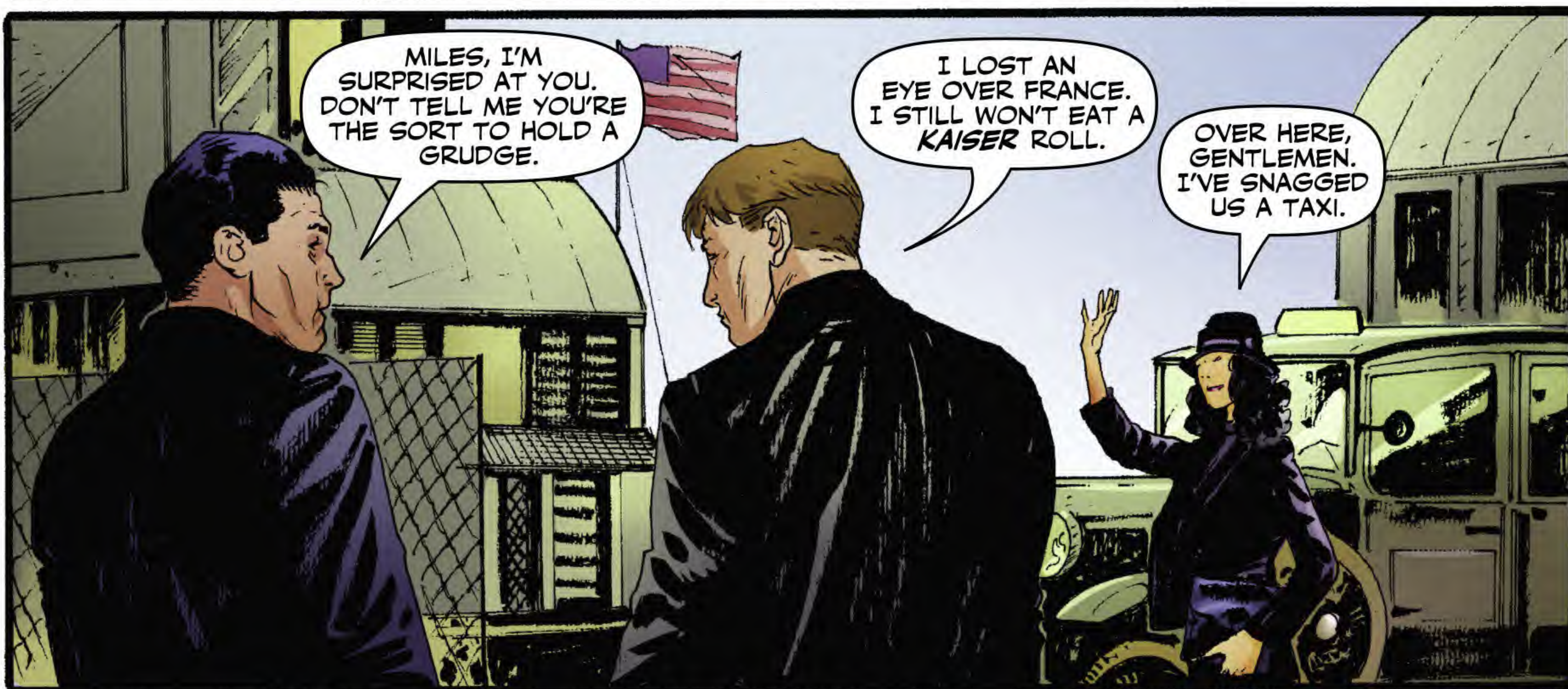
ONLY TOO HAPPY TO HELP, MR. CRANSTON.

"BOSS, DO YOU REALLY NEED ME TO TELL YOU THIS IS A BAD IDEA?"



YOU DON'T THINK I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF, MILES?

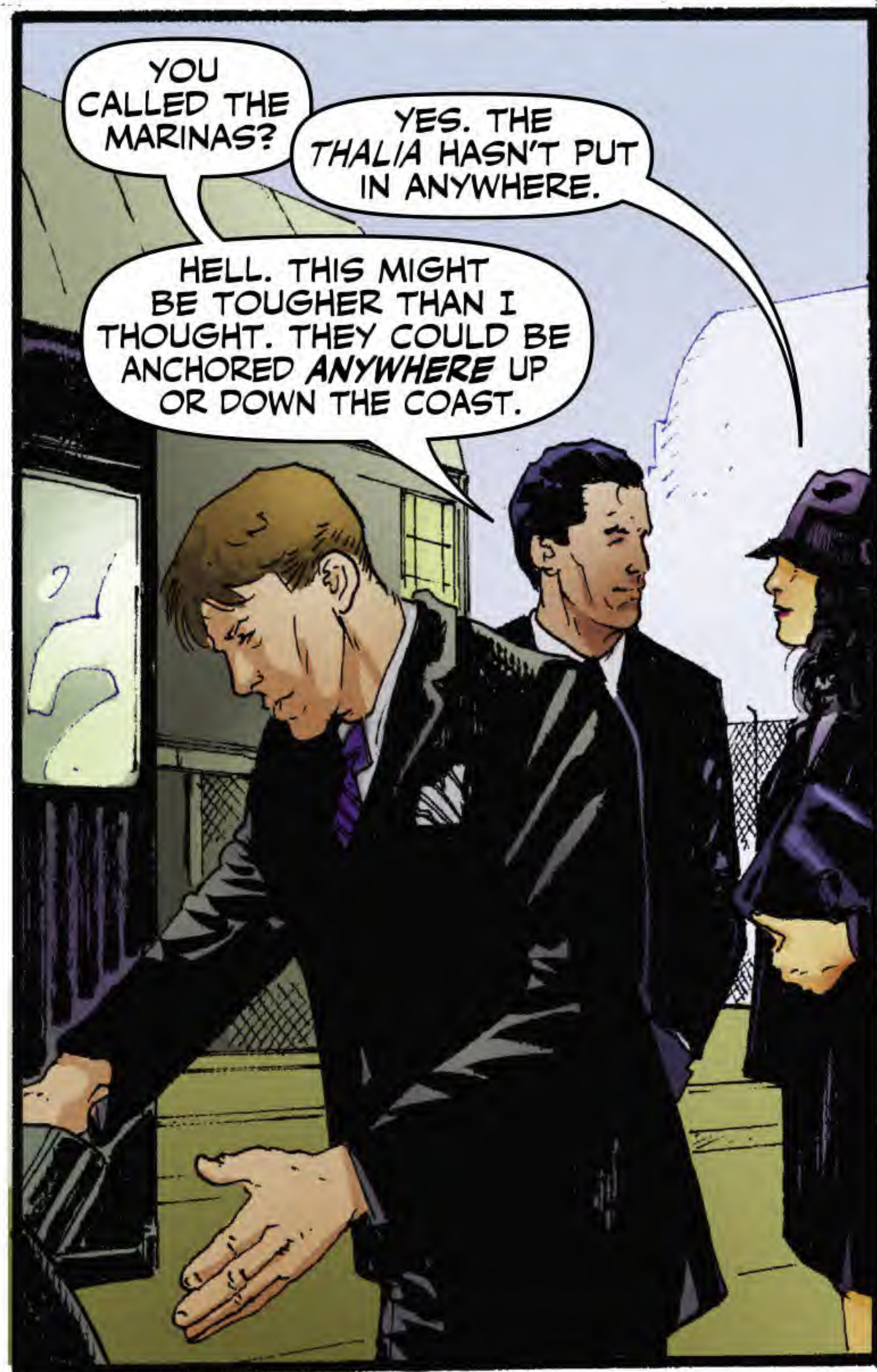
I THINK EVERY TIME YOU TURN YOUR BACK ON THAT BITCH YOU RISK GETTING A *BULLET* IN IT.



MILES, I'M SURPRISED AT YOU. DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE THE SORT TO HOLD A GRUDGE.

I LOST AN EYE OVER FRANCE. I STILL WON'T EAT A *KAISER* ROLL.

OVER HERE, GENTLEMEN. I'VE SNAGGED US A TAXI.



YOU CALLED THE MARINAS?

YES. THE *THALIA* HASN'T PUT IN ANYWHERE.

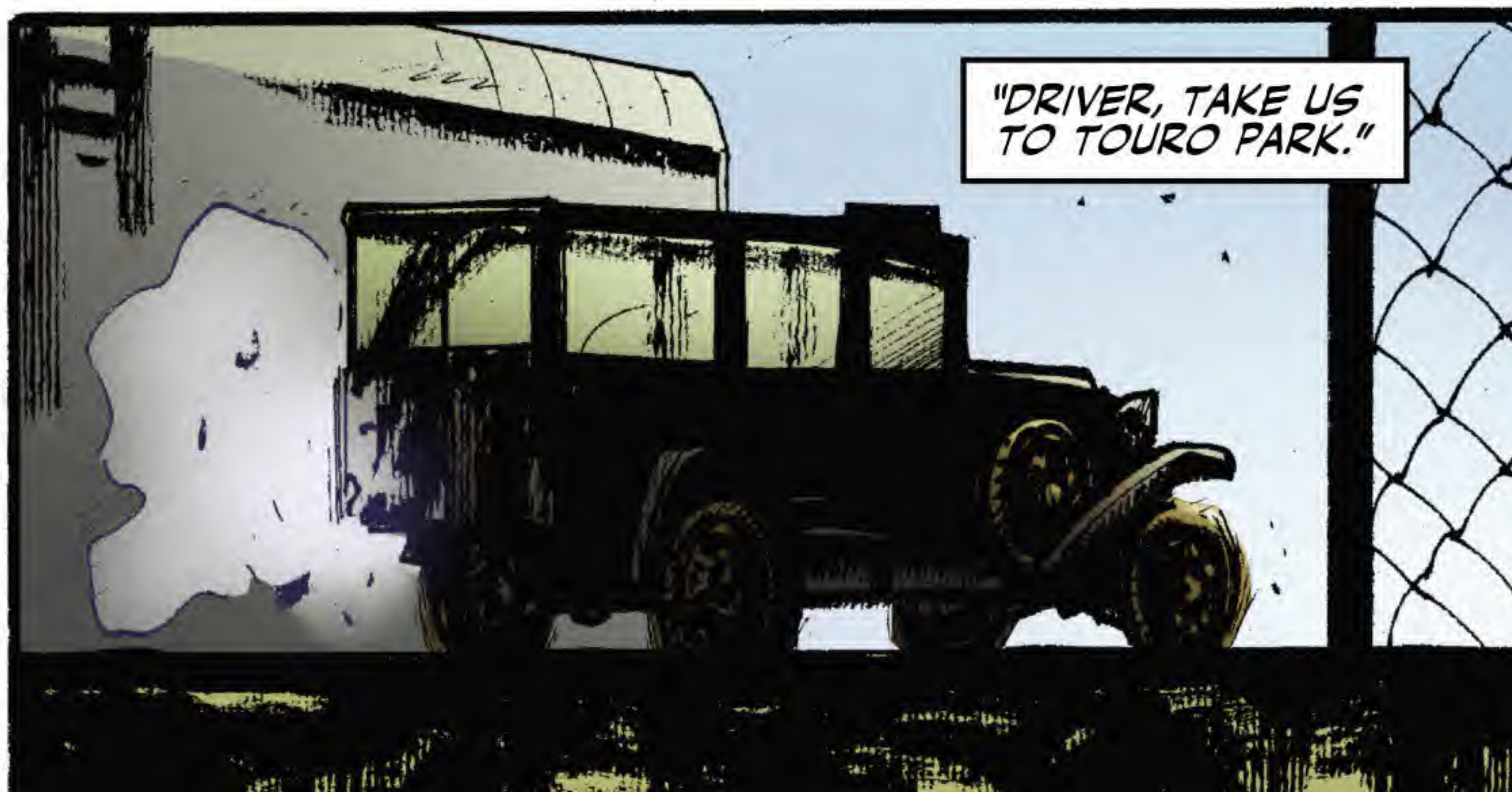
HELL. THIS MIGHT BE TOUGHER THAN I THOUGHT. THEY COULD BE ANCHORED *ANYWHERE* UP OR DOWN THE COAST.



WHEN DID YOU BECOME SUCH A *PESSIMIST*, DARLING?

I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW WHERE ARGUS AND HIS THUGS ARE?

NO. BUT I KNOW WHERE THEY'RE *GOING* TO BE.

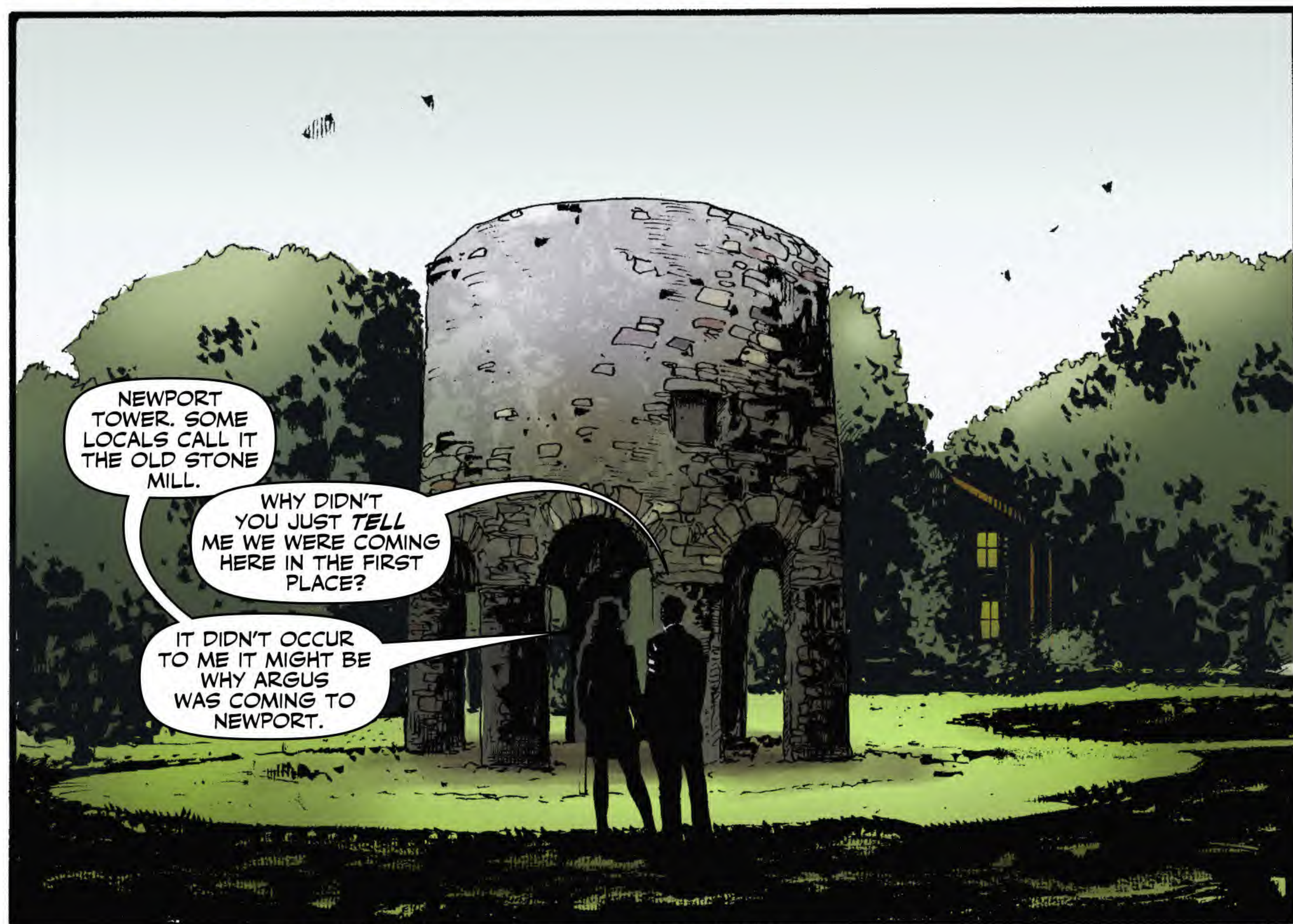


"DRIVER, TAKE US TO *TOURO* PARK."



OKAY,
I'LL BITE.

WHAT IS
IT?



NEWPORT
TOWER. SOME
LOCALS CALL IT
THE OLD STONE
MILL.

WHY DIDN'T
YOU JUST TELL
ME WE WERE COMING
HERE IN THE FIRST
PLACE?

IT DIDN'T OCCUR
TO ME IT MIGHT BE
WHY ARGUS
WAS COMING TO
NEWPORT.



I WAS READING ABOUT IT WHILE
PLANNING THE HEIST. THE STONE
AND THE TOWER ARE CONNECTED IN
LOCAL HISTORY, BUT I CAN'T
REMEMBER HOW.

HMMM.
TIME TO MAKE
ANOTHER PHONE
CALL.

ALL OF US WEALTHY MEN ABOUT TOWN
KNOW ONE ANOTHER, AND FOR US A
PHONE CALL CAN BE MORE POWERFUL
THAN A PAIR OF PISTOLS.

"YOU APPEAR TO BE A
WELL-CONNECTED MAN,
MR. CRANSTON."

I DON'T USUALLY
SEE PEOPLE AFTER OFFICE
HOURS, BUT MY DEAN TOLD ME
ONE OF THE UNIVERSITY'S
MORE INFLUENTIAL ALUMNI
SUGGESTED I MAKE
TIME FOR YOU.

WE APPRECIATE IT,
PROFESSOR JENKS. WE
WOULDN'T HAVE DRIVEN
UP FROM NEWPORT IF IT
WASN'T IMPORTANT.

WE'VE BEEN TOLD YOU'RE
THE MAN TO ASK WHEN IT
COMES TO THE NEWPORT
TOWER.

IT'S THE REMAINS
OF AN OLD WINDMILL.
I HOPE THAT WAS
WORTH THE
DRIVE.

BUT ISN'T
THERE *ANOTHER*
THEORY? ONE
INVOLVING THE MOON
STONE?

AHHH. SO
YOU WANT TO
HEAR ABOUT THE
TEMPLARS.

DO WE?

YES.
WE DO.

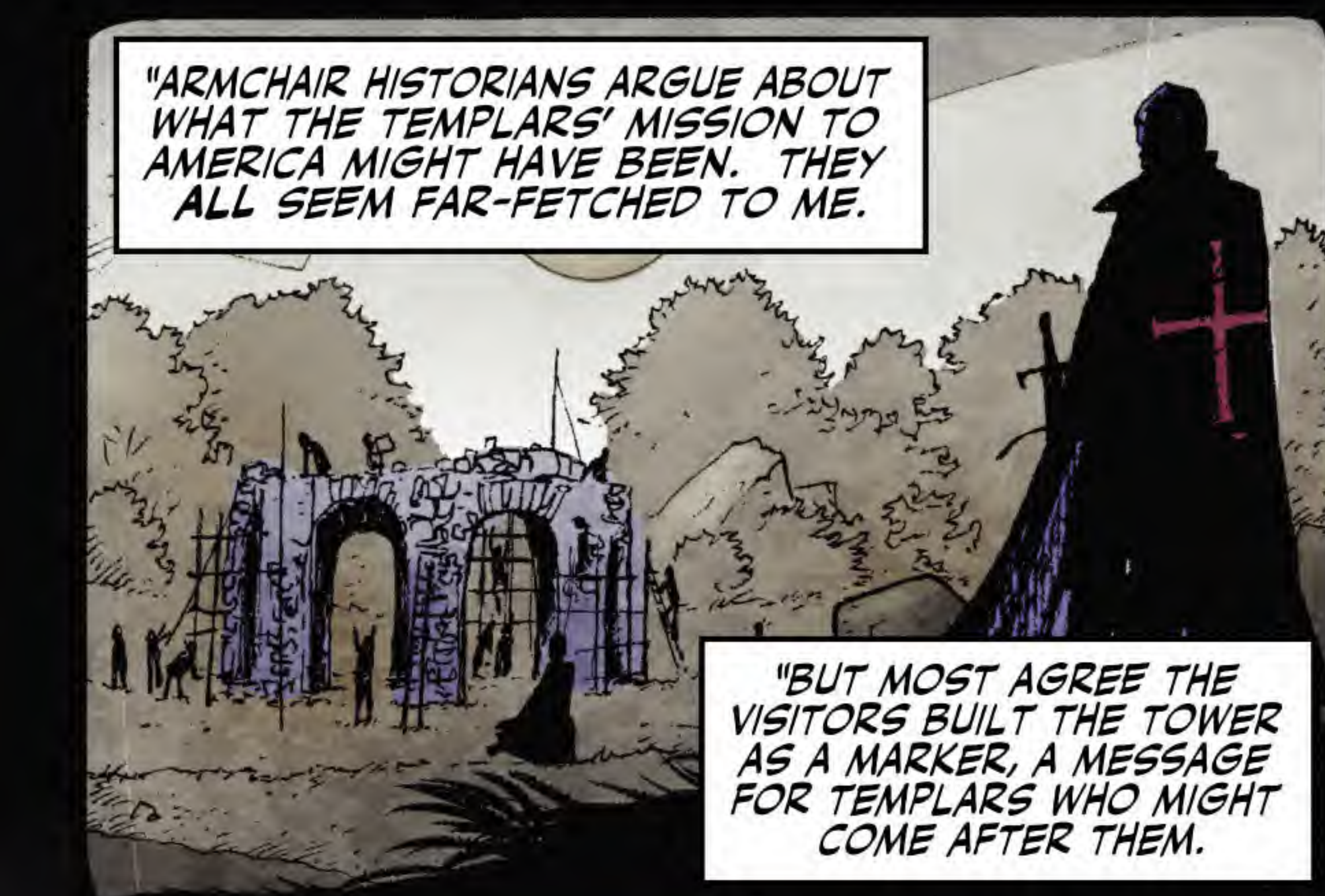
"THE LEGEND CLAIMS THAT AN
EXPEDITION OF TEMPLAR KNIGHTS
SET FOOT ON NORTH AMERICAN
SHORES A HUNDRED YEARS
BEFORE COLUMBUS.



"THE STORY GOES THAT THEY MET WITH A NUMBER OF INDIAN TRIBES. SOME WERE FRIENDLY.

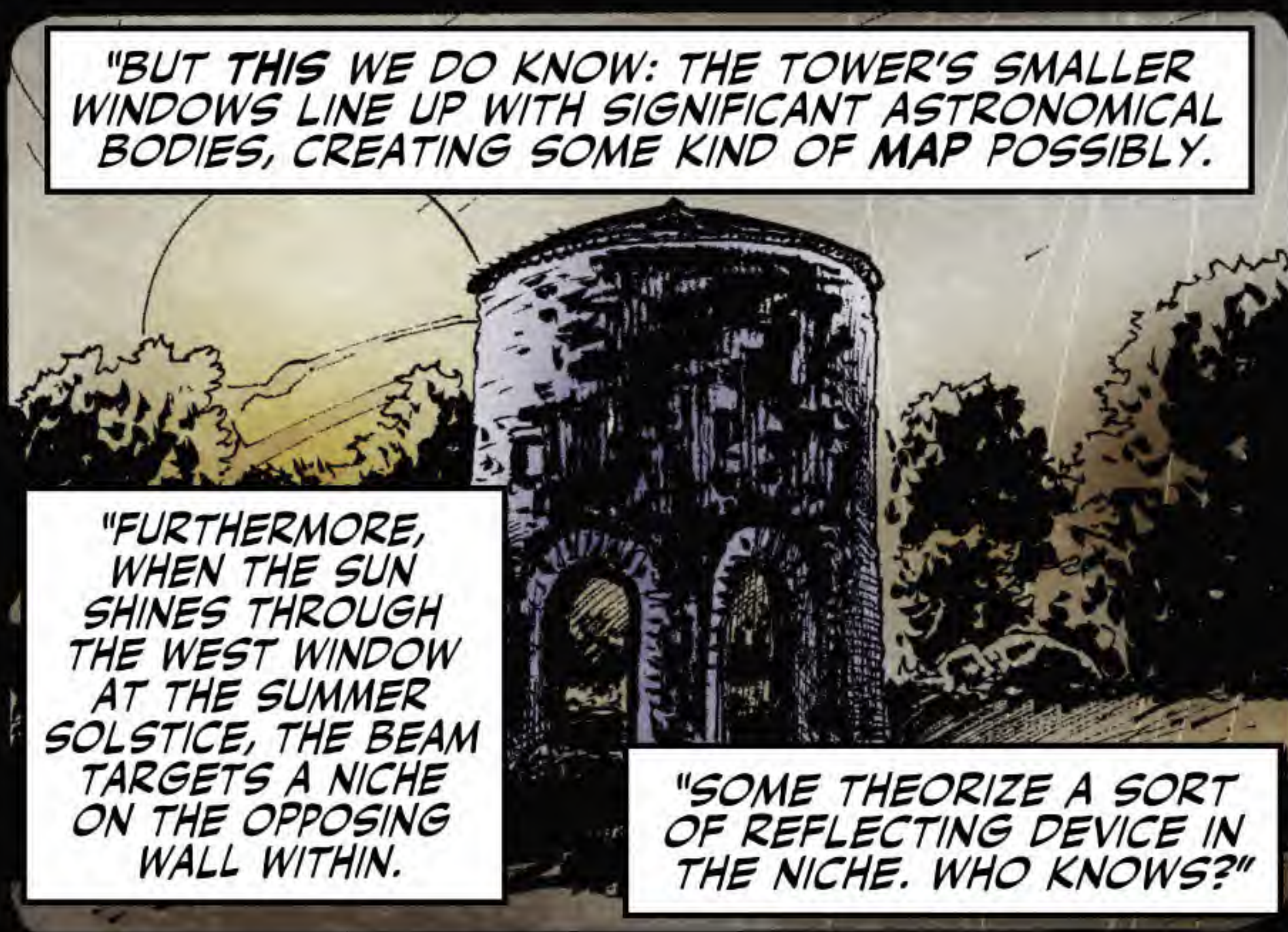


"OTHER TRIBES... NOT SO MUCH.



"ARMCHAIR HISTORIANS ARGUE ABOUT WHAT THE TEMPLARS' MISSION TO AMERICA MIGHT HAVE BEEN. THEY ALL SEEM FAR-FETCHED TO ME.

"BUT MOST AGREE THE VISITORS BUILT THE TOWER AS A MARKER, A MESSAGE FOR TEMPLARS WHO MIGHT COME AFTER THEM.



"BUT THIS WE DO KNOW: THE TOWER'S SMALLER WINDOWS LINE UP WITH SIGNIFICANT ASTRONOMICAL BODIES, CREATING SOME KIND OF MAP POSSIBLY.

"FURTHERMORE, WHEN THE SUN SHINES THROUGH THE WEST WINDOW AT THE SUMMER SOLSTICE, THE BEAM TARGETS A NICHE ON THE OPPOSING WALL WITHIN.

"SOME THEORIZE A SORT OF REFLECTING DEVICE IN THE NICHE. WHO KNOWS?"

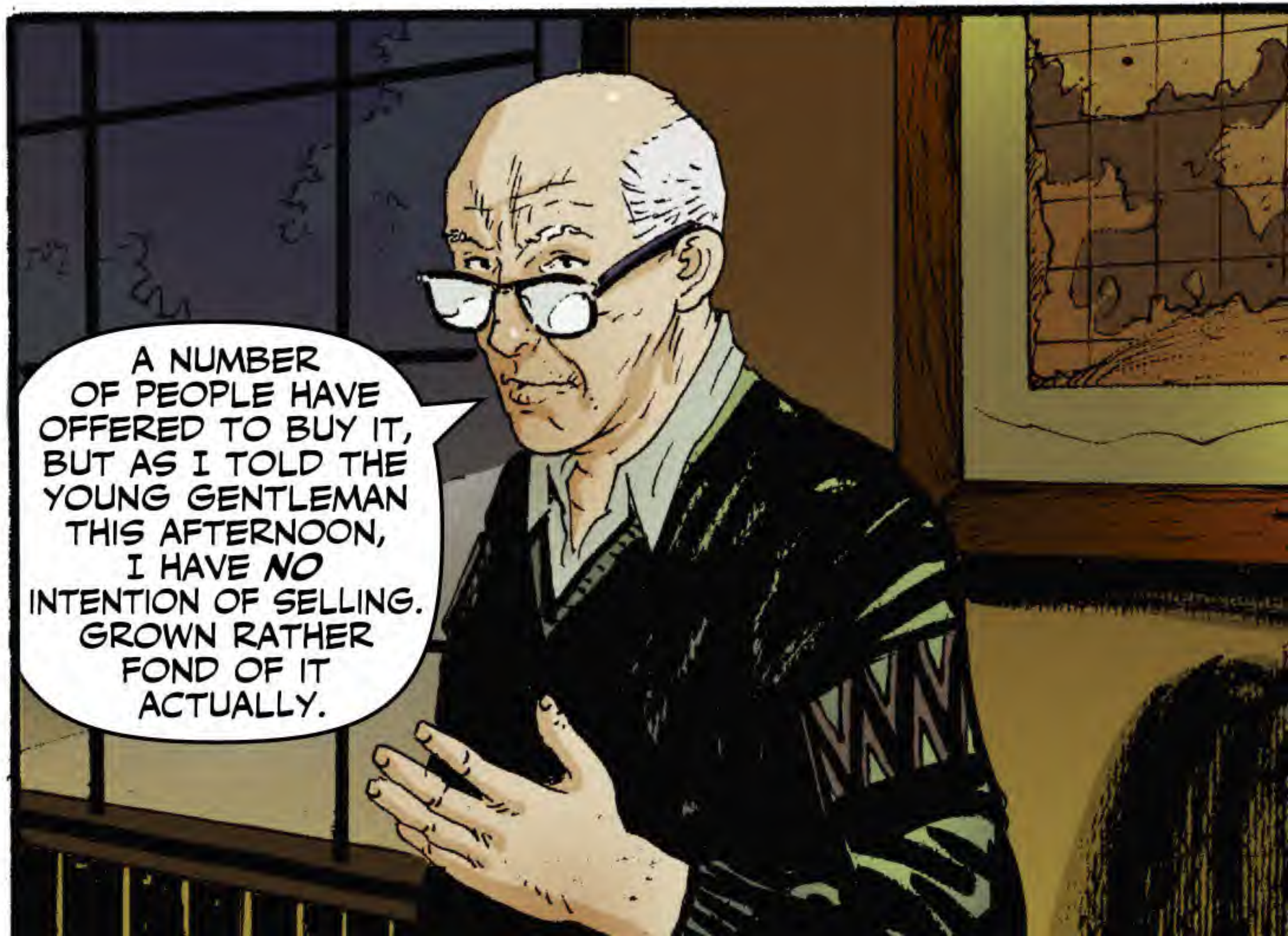
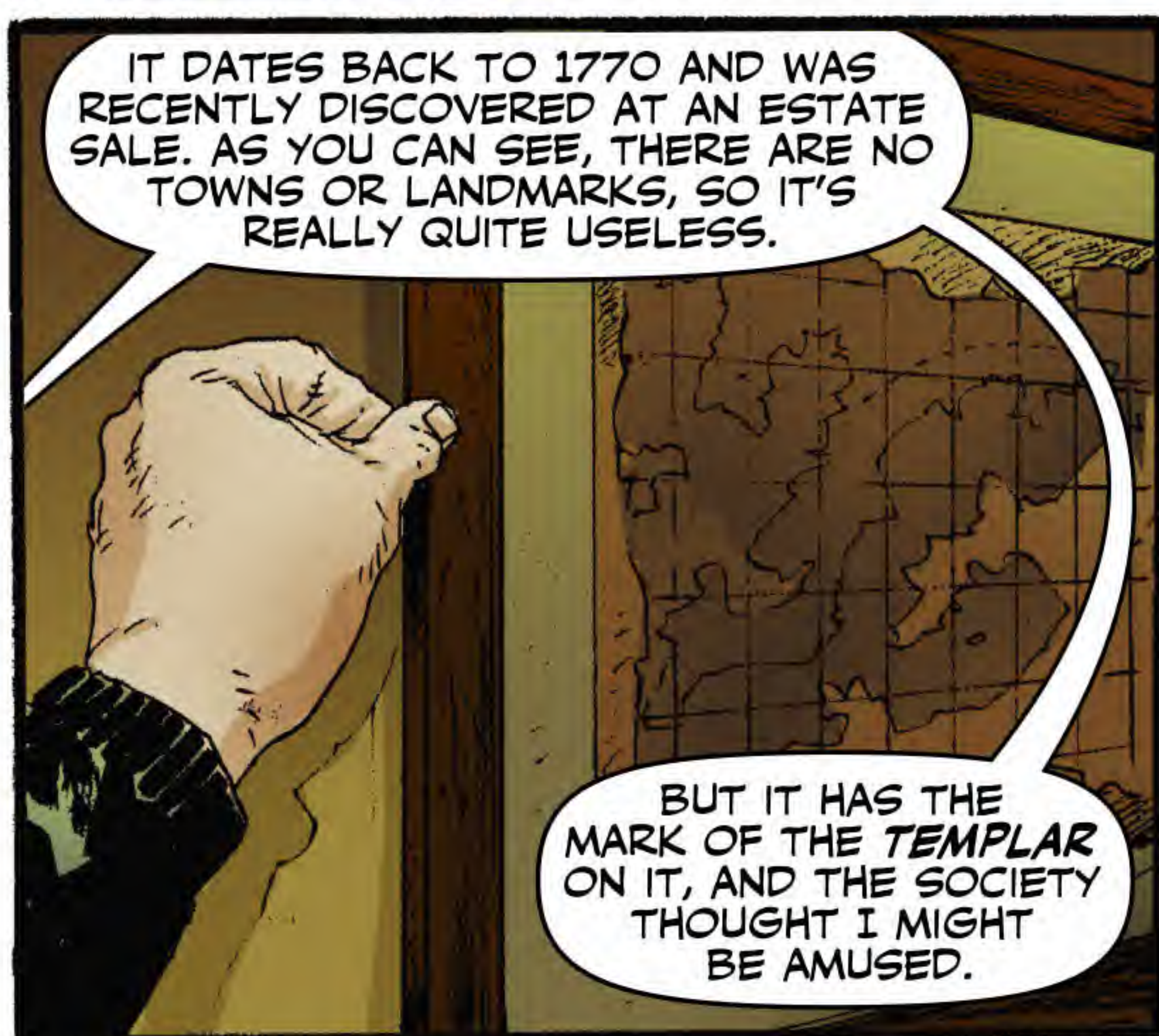
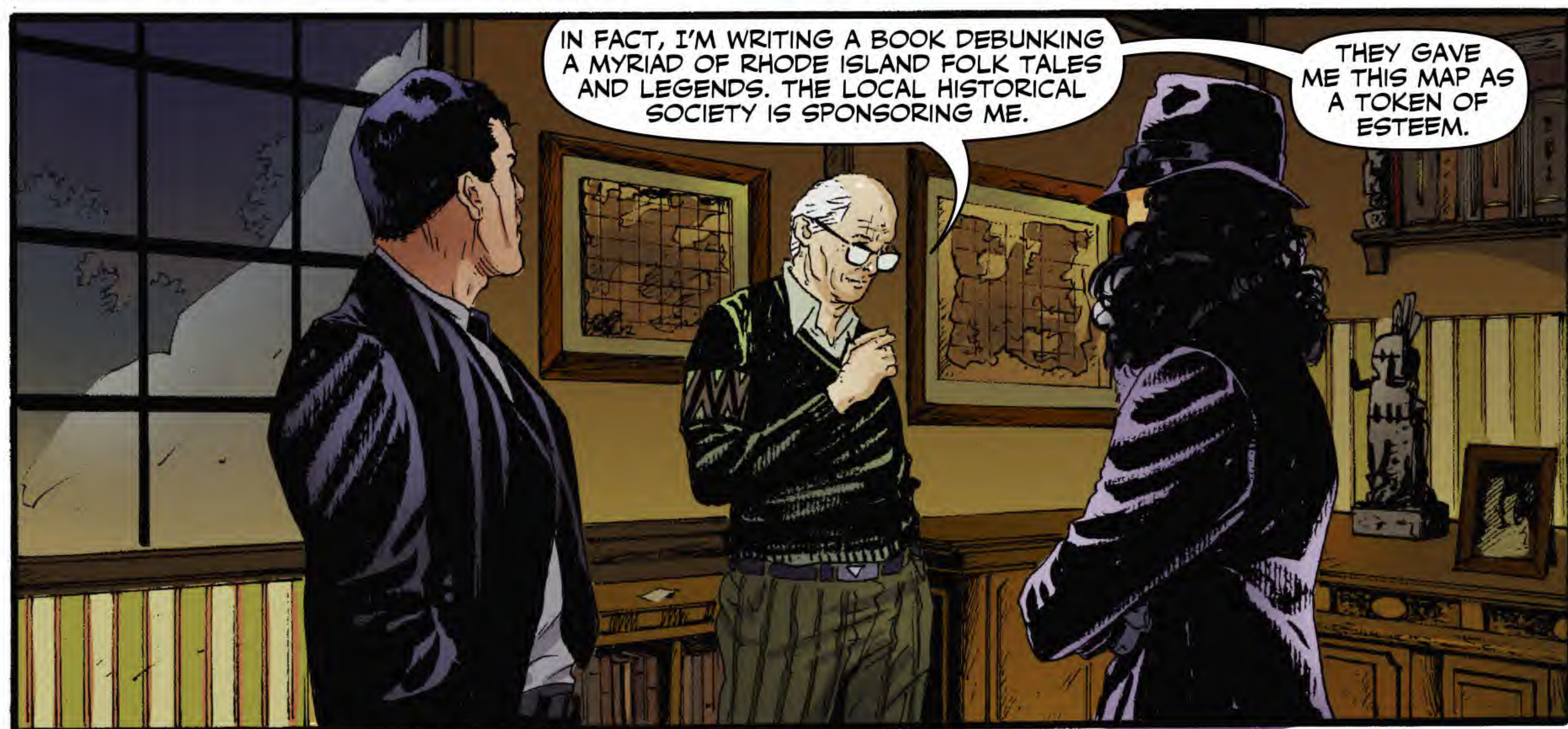
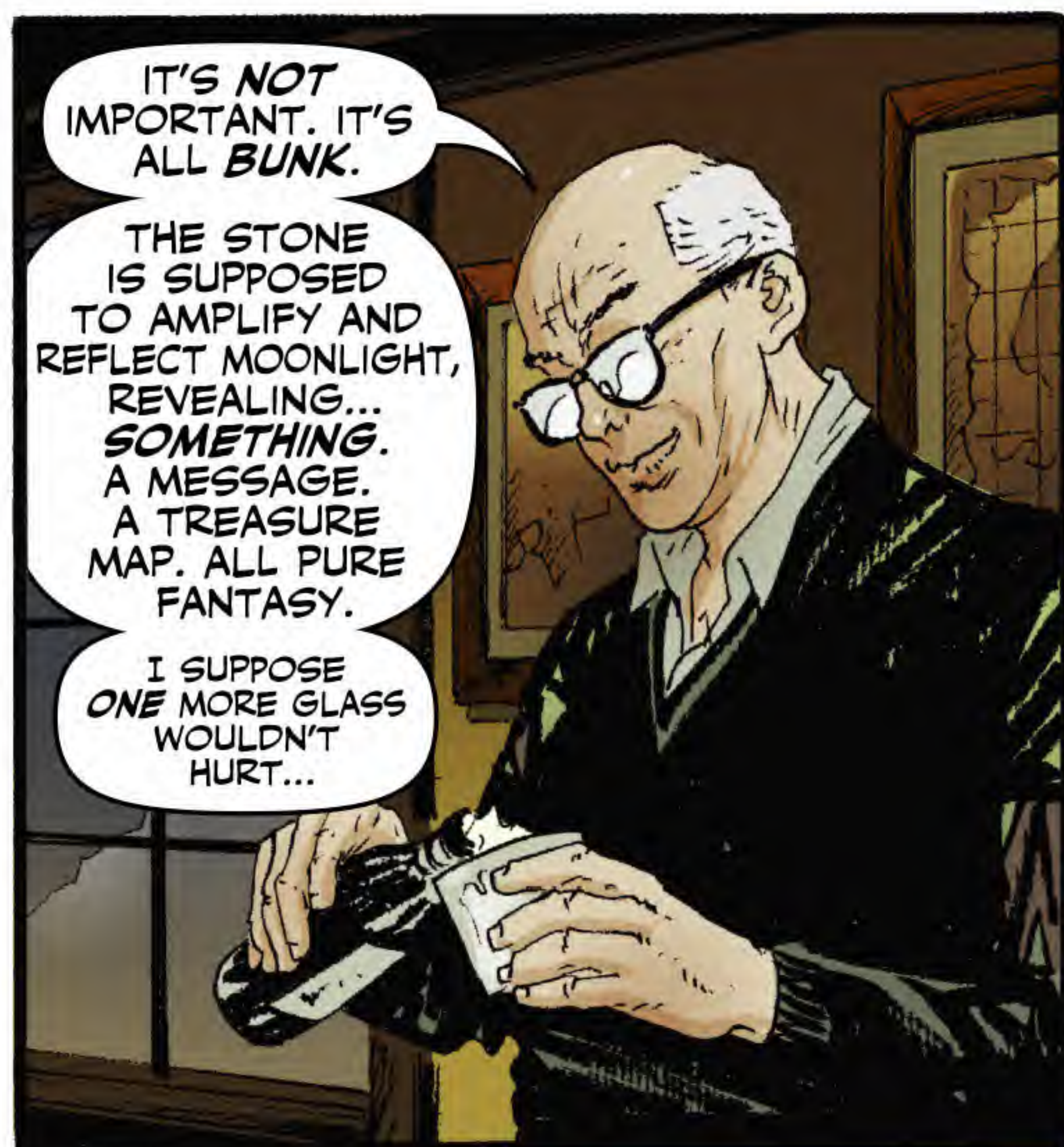


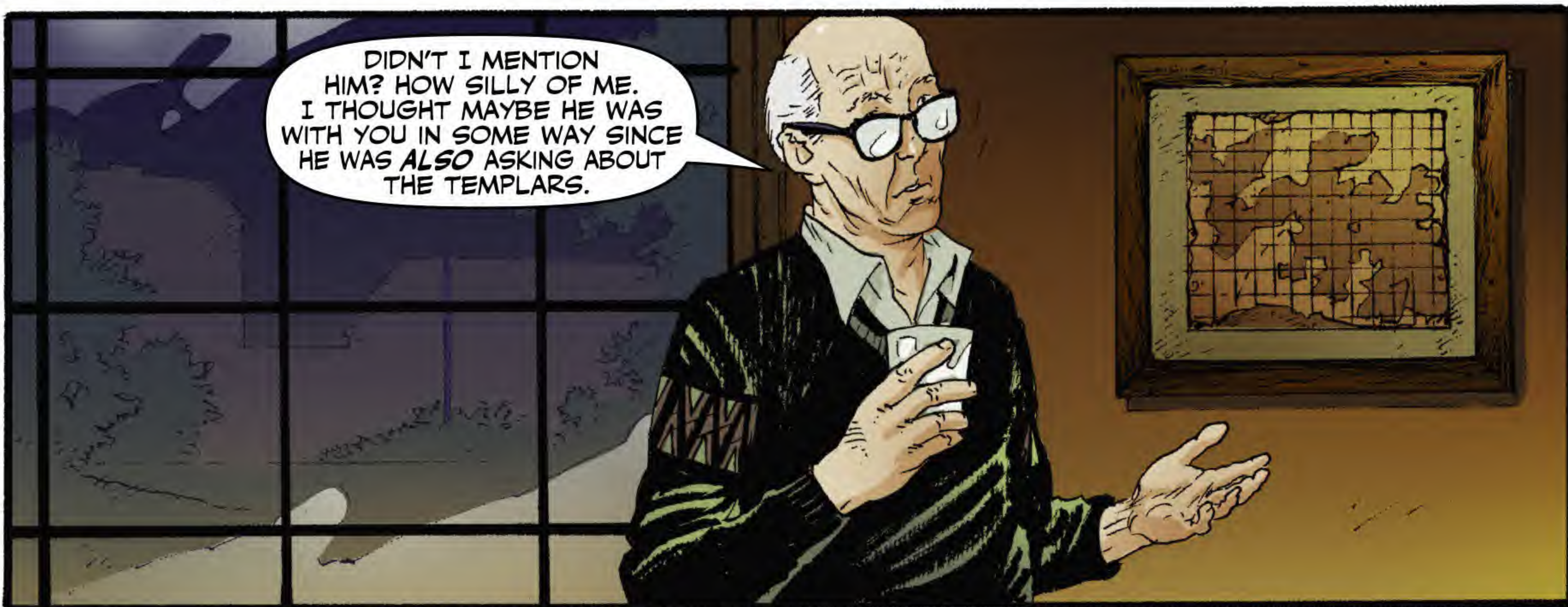
OR A MOON STONE PERHAPS?

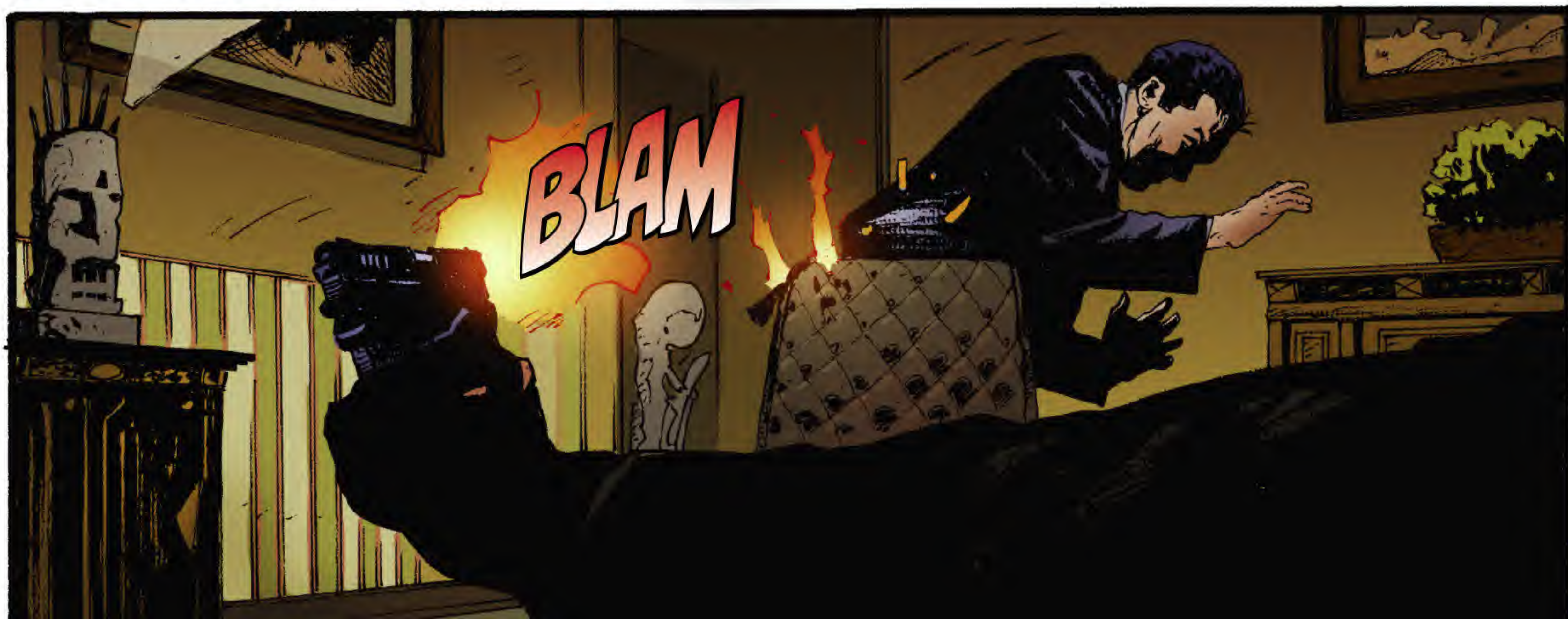
MY DEAR GIRL, YOU CAN'T SHINE SUNLIGHT ON A MOON STONE. HOW INELOQUENT. NO NO NO...



YOU'D NEED MOONLIGHT.

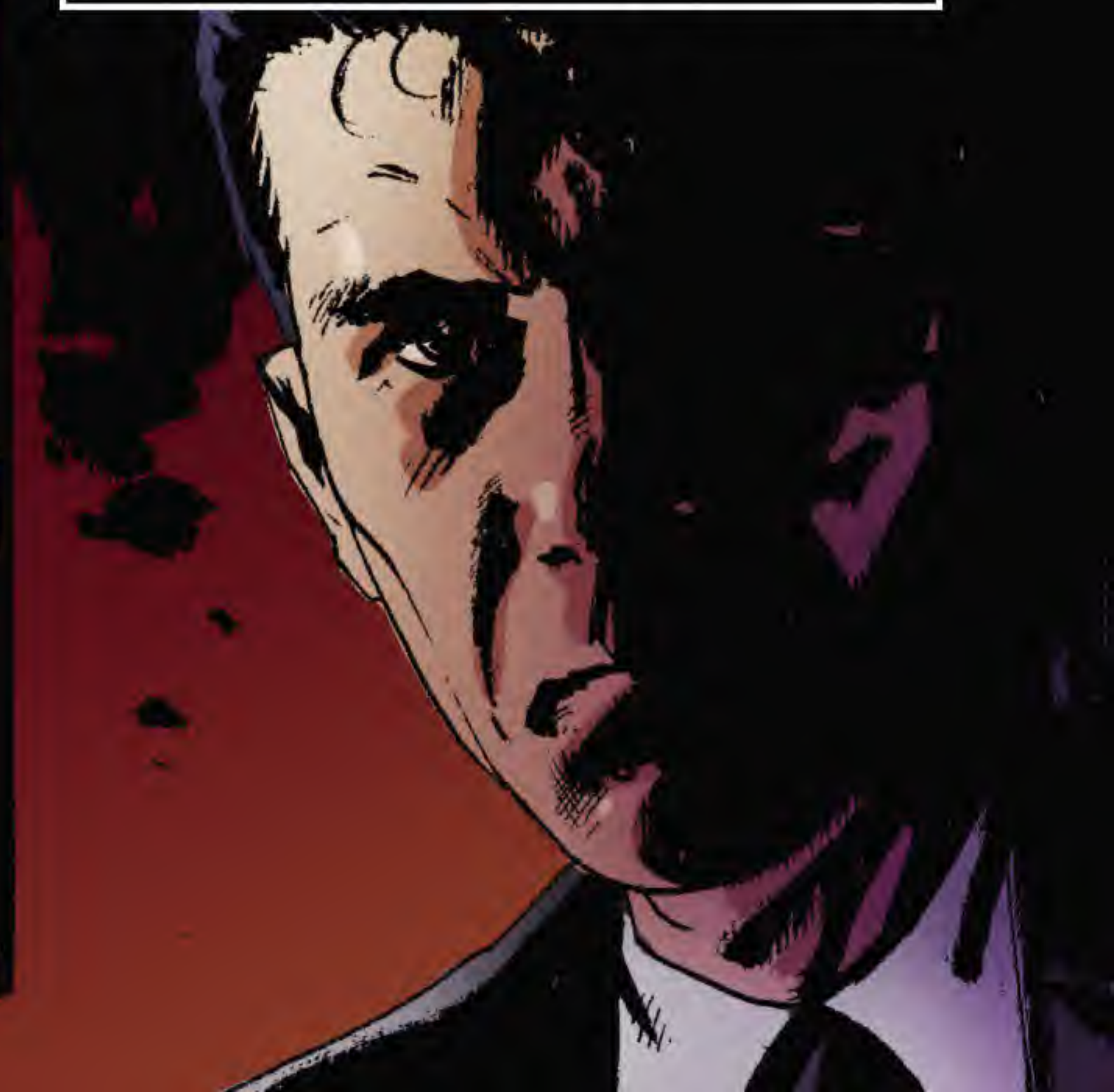








EVENTUALLY, THERE COMES A TIME WHEN *THE MAN* HAS TO SIT, AND *THE SHADOW* COMES IN OFF THE BENCH.






I'LL LEVEL WITH YOU.
I'M NERVOUS EVERY TIME,
JUST FOR A SPLIT-SECOND.
NOT MUCH.



THE NOTION THAT THE
MAN ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH
RUBS ME THE WRONG WAY.



BUT WHEN CRANSTON YIELDS,
AND I'M FULLY *HIM*, THE MAN IN THE HAT,
I CAN FEEL IT'S RIGHT. I WONDER HOW I
COULD *EVER* BE SATISFIED JUST BEING A
GLIB, GIN-SWILLING MAN ABOUT TOWN.



AND *THAT* THOUGHT MAKES
ME NERVOUS TOO.



THERE
YOU ARE,
DARLING.

SUCH A BAD
MAN TO KEEP A
LADY WAITING.



THIS IS HOW
IT SHOULD BE.
THE TWO OF US
TOGETHER. THE
LORD AND LADY
OF THE NIGHT.

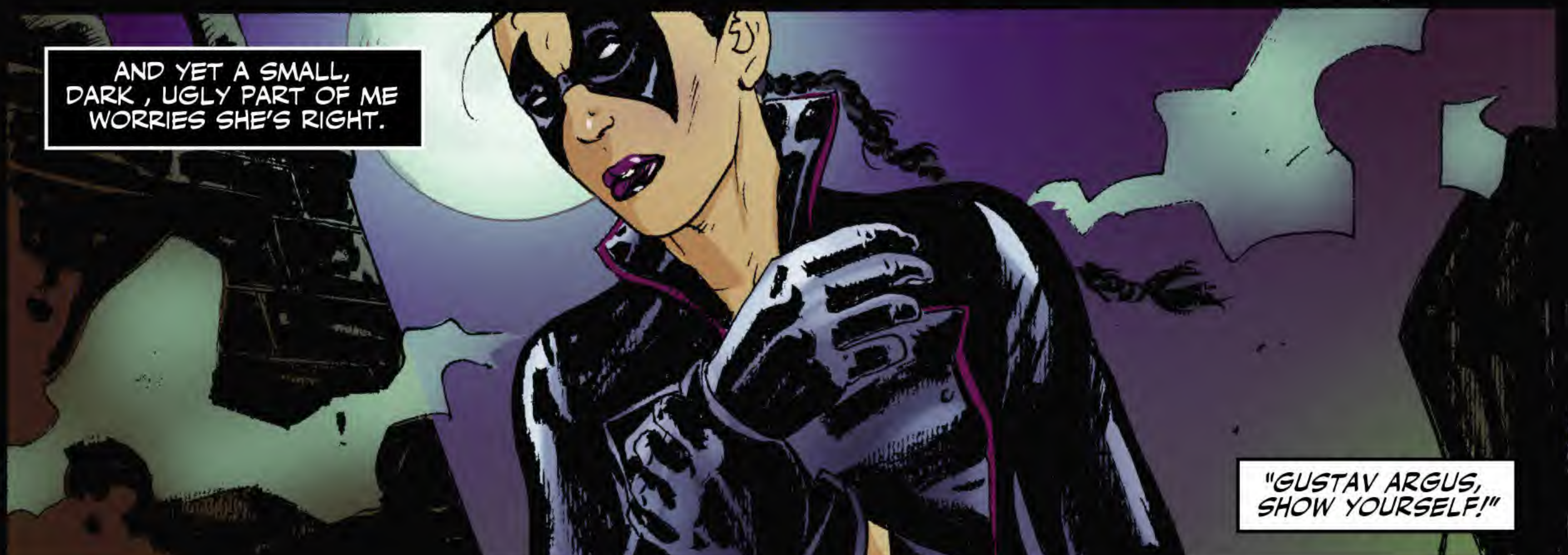
DON'T TELL
ME THAT BIT OF FLUFF
I FOUND IN YOUR KITCHEN
COULD EVER MAKE YOU
HAPPY LIKE I COULD.



MY HAPPINESS
IS NONE OF YOUR
CONCERN. YOU AND
I WILL SETTLE
ACCOUNTS SOON
ENOUGH.

IT WAS ALWAYS CRANSTON
WHO WAS THE FLIRT, THE PLAYBOY,
QUICK WITH A WINK AND A QUIP.

THE SHADOW IS MORE DIRECT.
LESS FORGIVING. CLARITY OF
PURPOSE IS HIS STRENGTH.



AND YET A SMALL,
DARK, UGLY PART OF ME
WORRIES SHE'S RIGHT.

"GUSTAV ARGUS,
SHOW YOURSELF!"



RIGHT HERE,
AKASH. AND **ALONE**
AS INSTRUCTED.

YOU
BROUGHT THE
STONE?

YOU GET THE
MOON STONE, *IF* YOU HAVE
THE MONEY. THIS LITTLE ITEM
WAS **NOT** AS EASY TO COME
BY AS PREDICTED.

YOU LOOK
LIKE **HELL**,
AKASH. WHAT
HAPPENED?



NEVER MIND...**ME**.
I'M F-FINE.

JUST HAND
OVER...THE DAMN...
STONE. I NEED TO
M-MAKE SURE IT'S...
THE REAL THING.



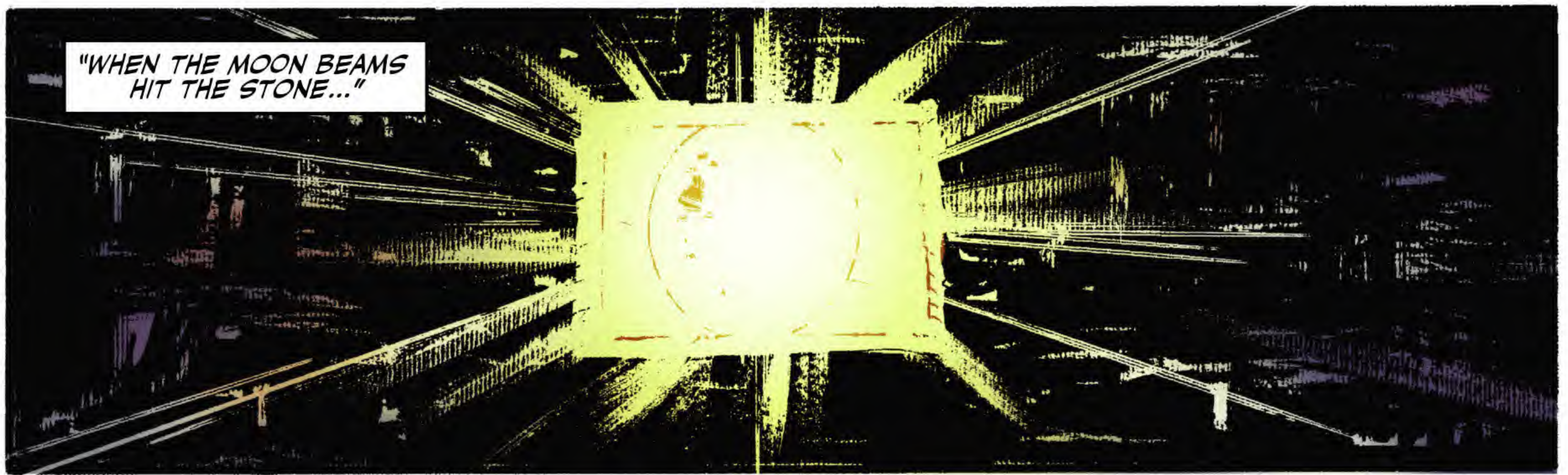
TWO OF MY MEN
DIED GETTING THIS THING.
I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHY IT'S
SO IMPORTANT.

I'LL **SHOW**
YOU.

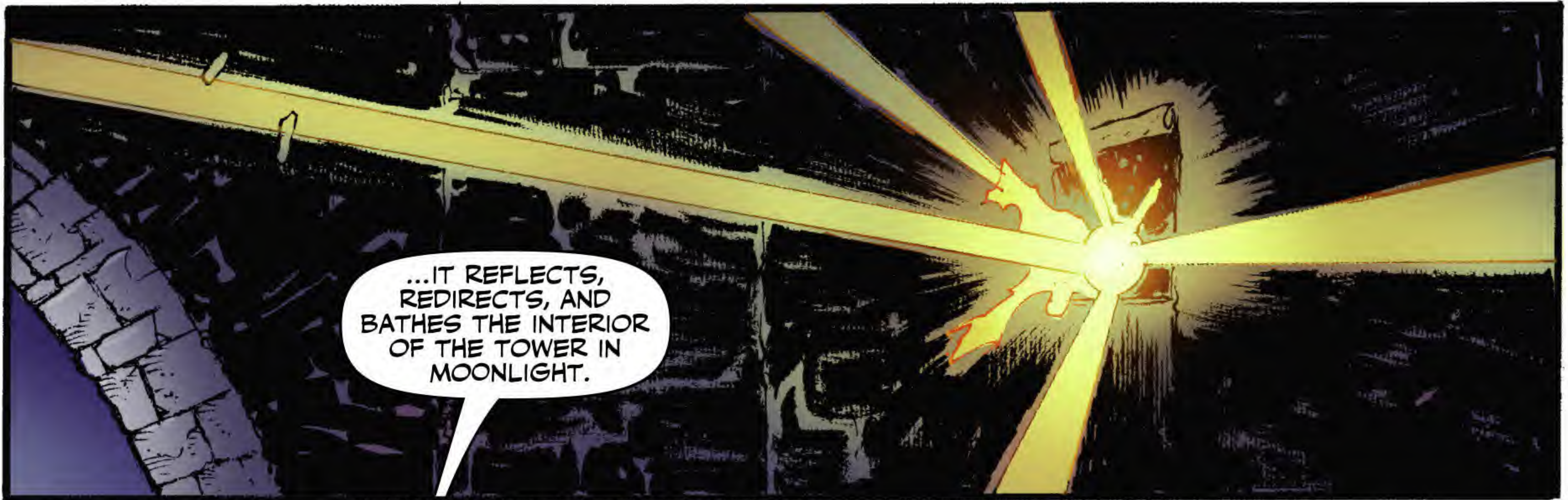
CENTURIES AGO,
THE TEMPLARS MADE A
PROMISE TO MY
PEOPLE.

THE MOON
STONE IS THE KEY
TO **UNLOCKING** THAT
PROMISE.





"WHEN THE MOON BEAMS
HIT THE STONE..."

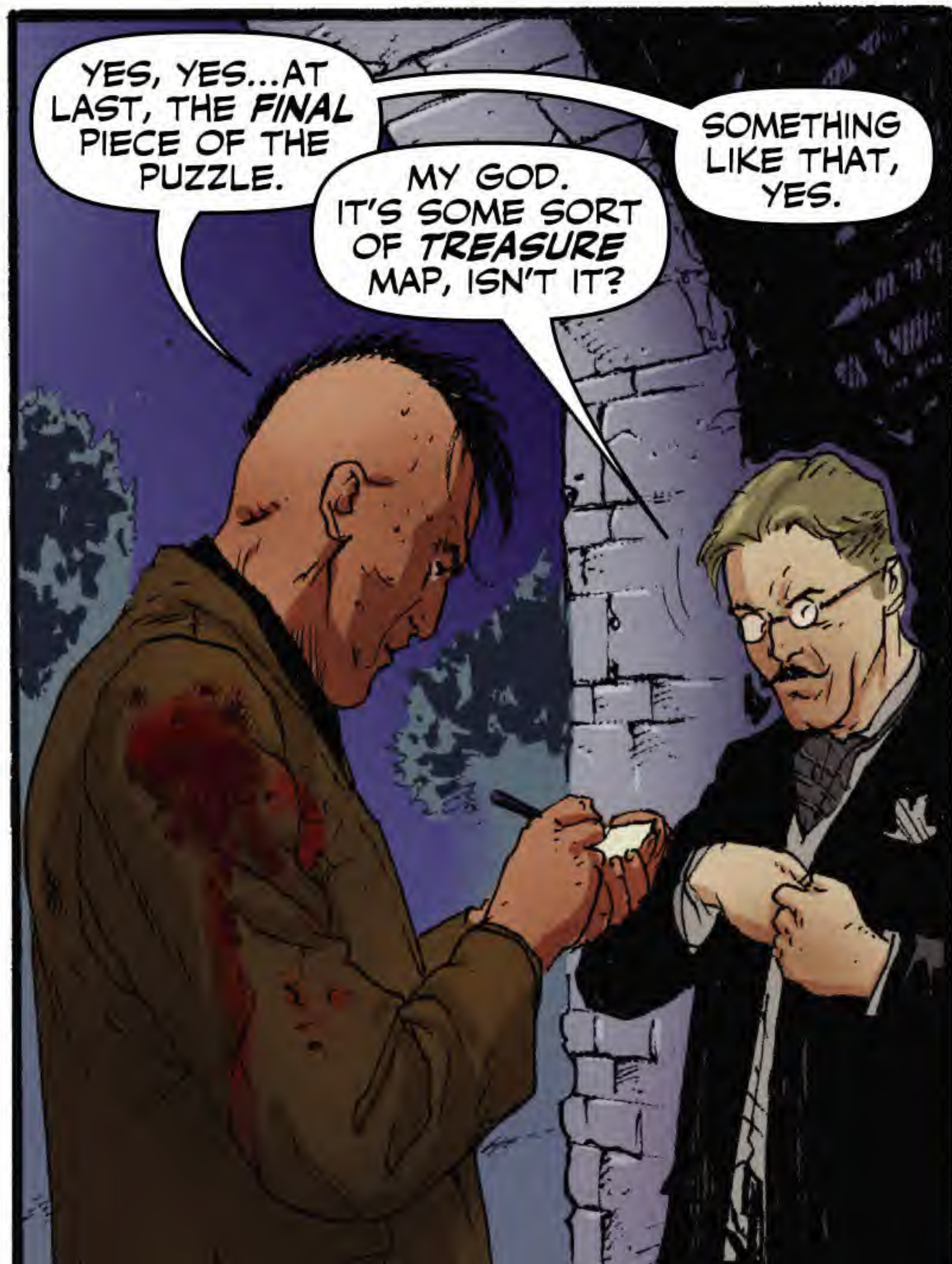


...IT REFLECTS,
REDIRECTS, AND
BATHES THE INTERIOR
OF THE TOWER IN
MOONLIGHT.



UP THERE!

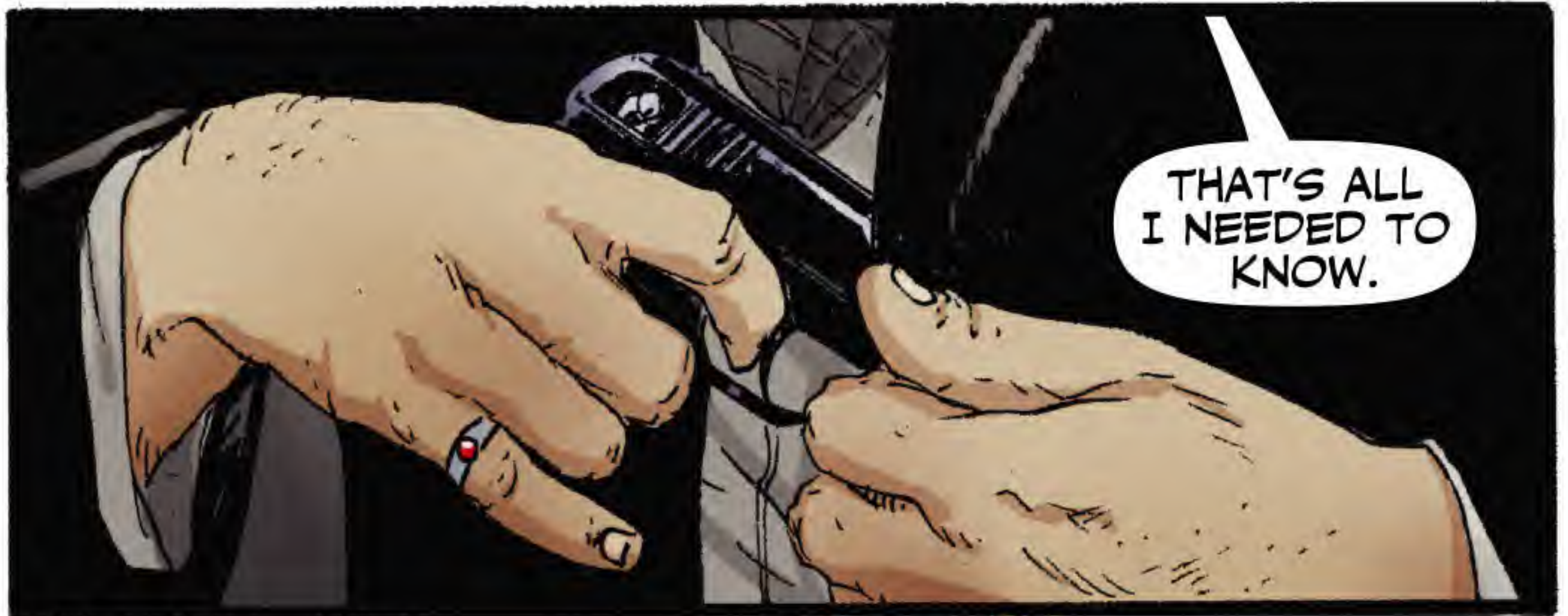
THE BUILDERS
WORKED **SHARDS** OF
MOON STONE INTO THE
MUNDANE STONework
TO CATCH THE LIGHT
AND REVEAL THE
MESSAGE.



YES, YES...AT
LAST, THE **FINAL**
PIECE OF THE
PUZZLE.

MY GOD.
IT'S SOME SORT
OF **TREASURE**
MAP, ISN'T IT?

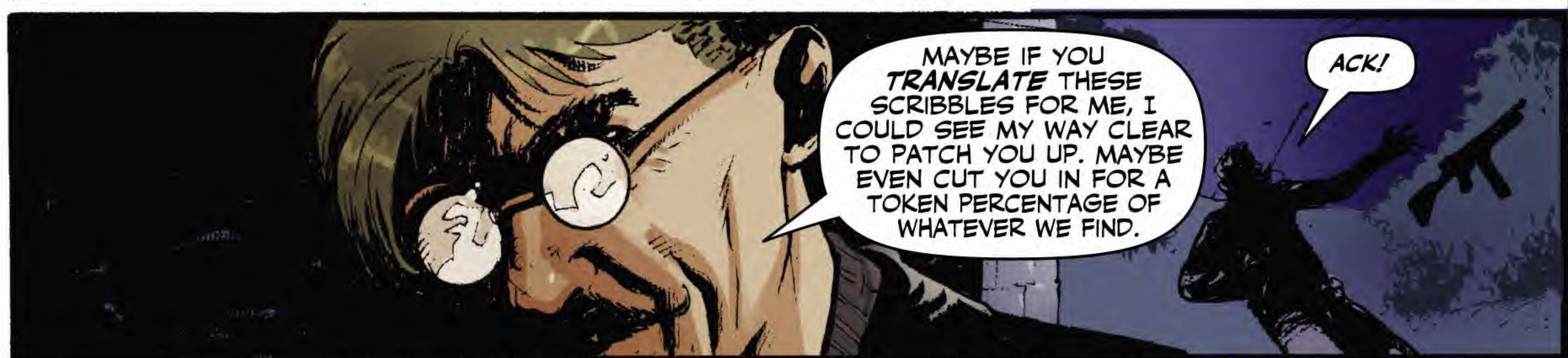
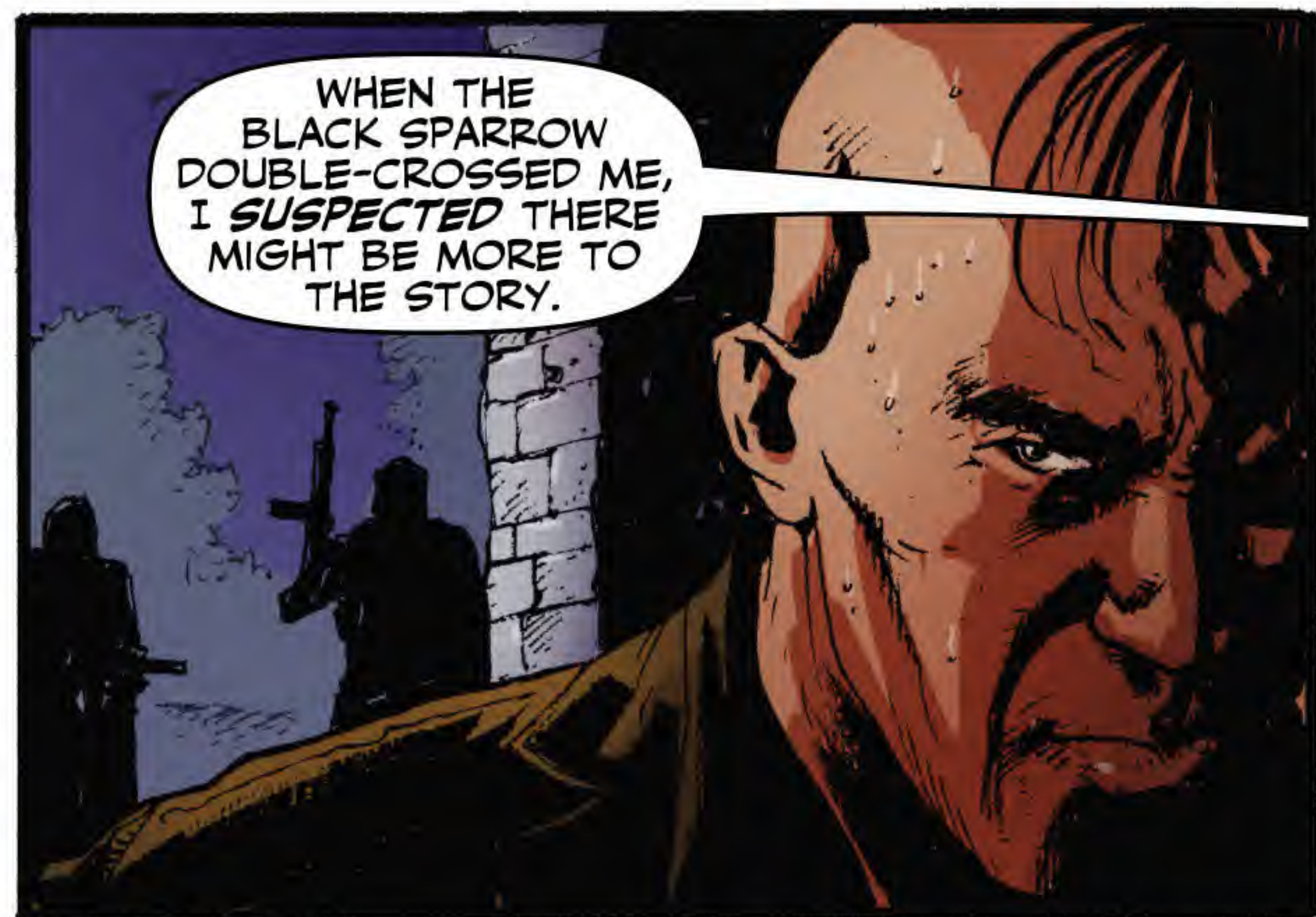
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT,
YES.



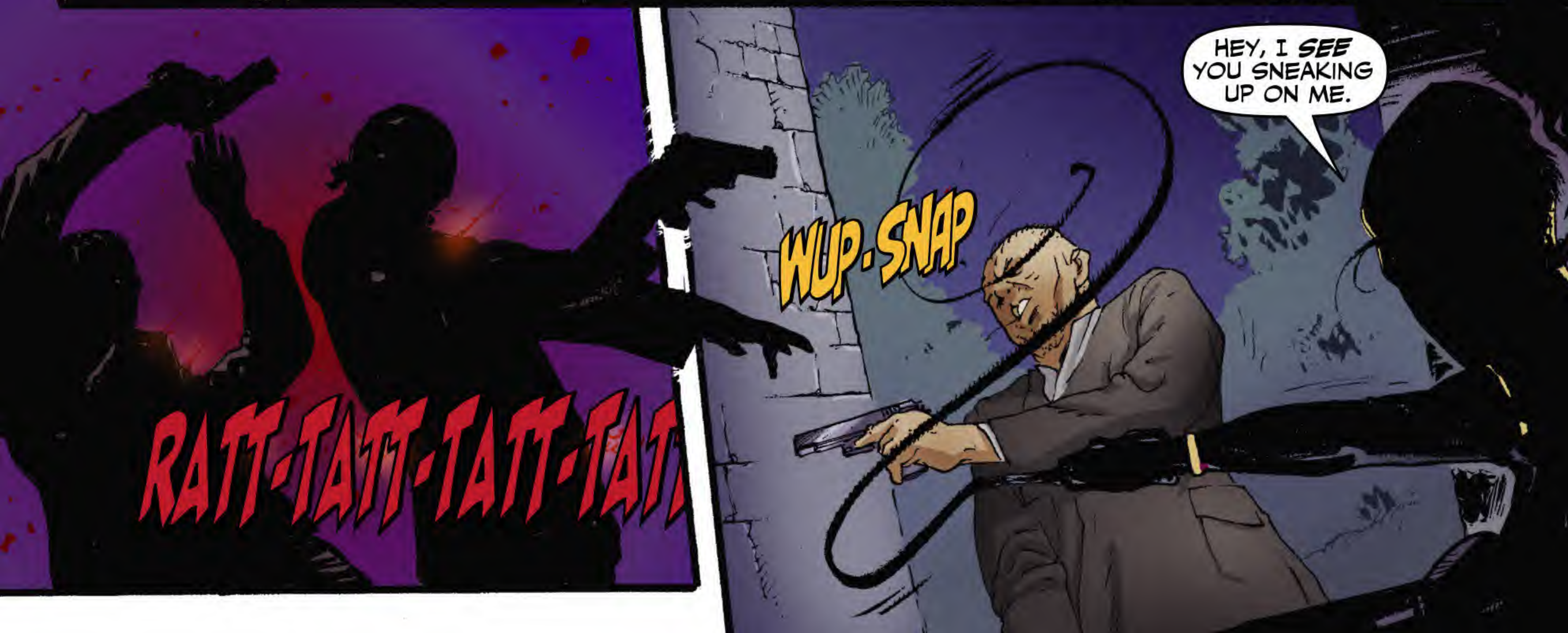
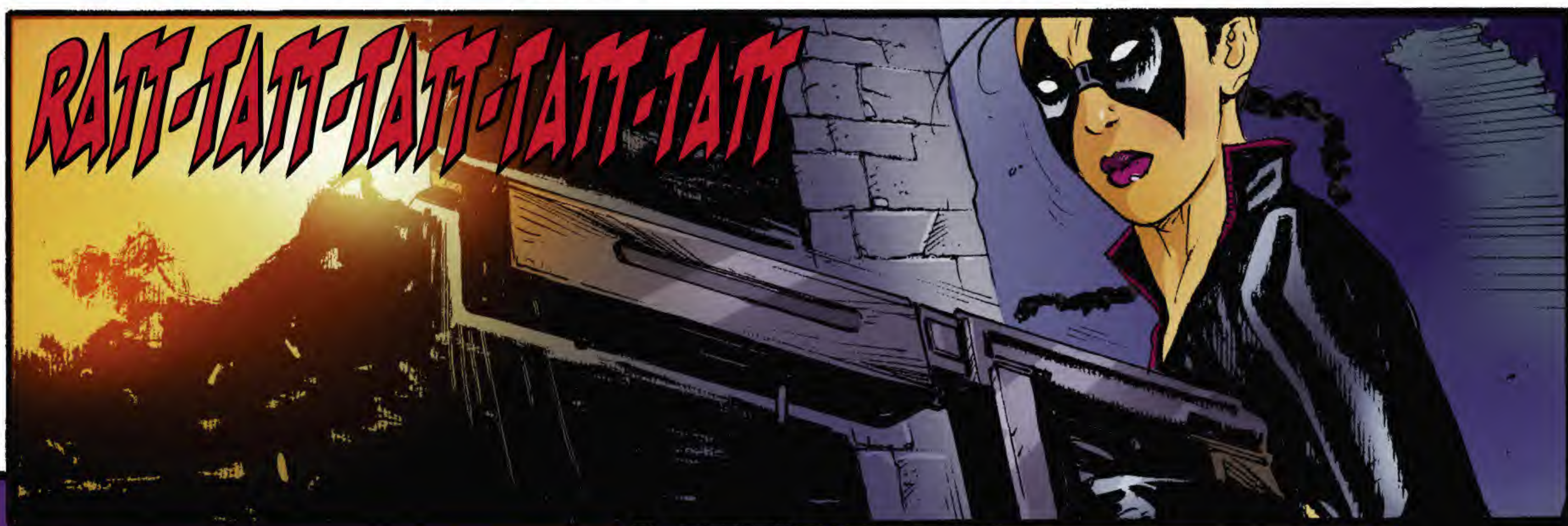
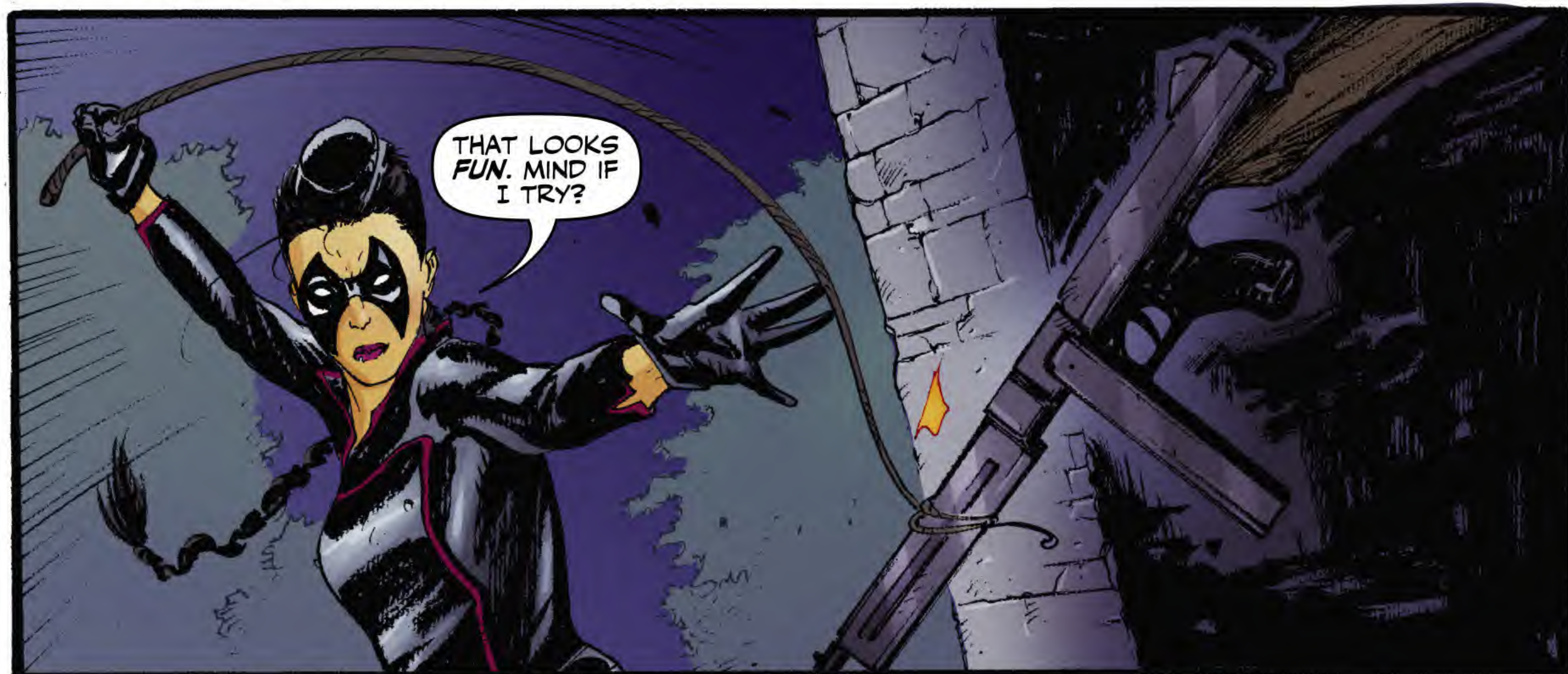
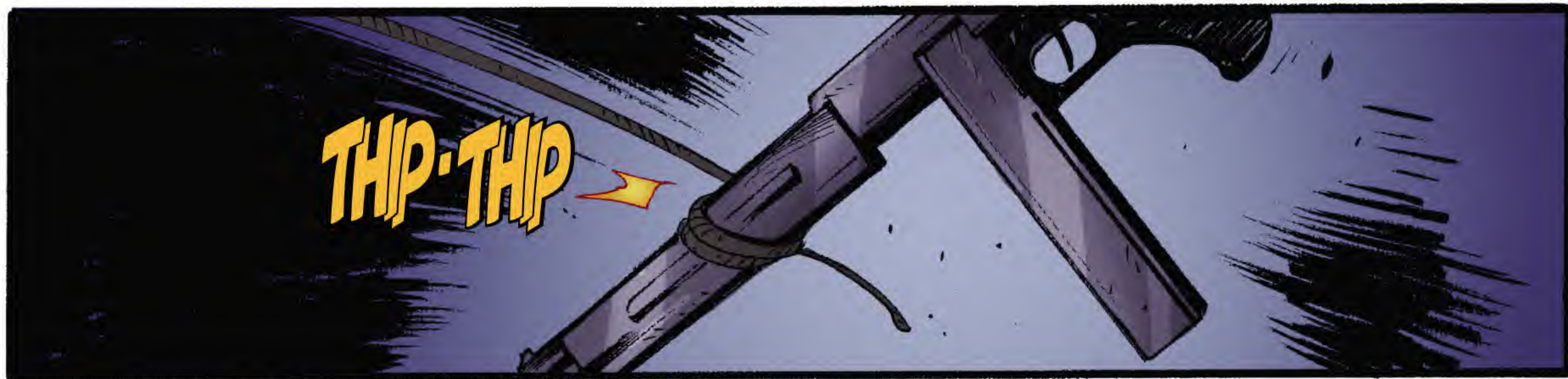
THAT'S ALL
I NEEDED TO
KNOW.

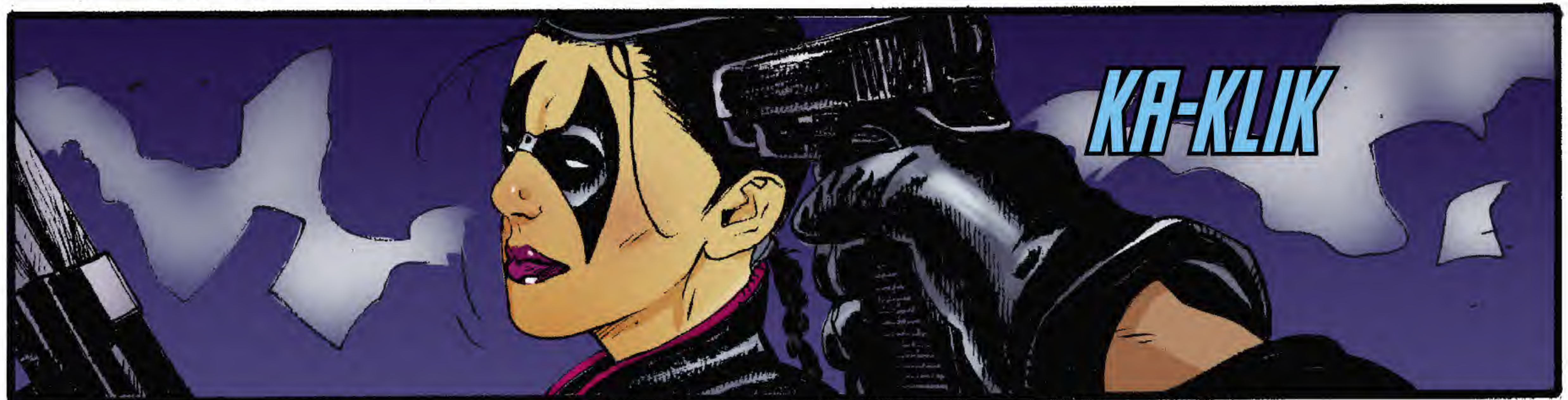
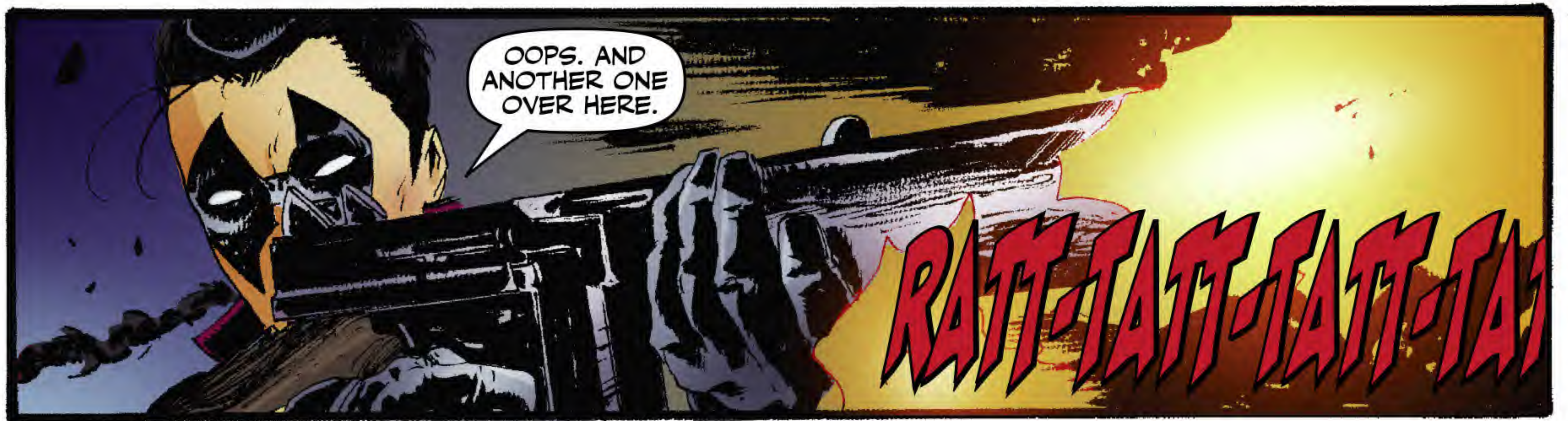


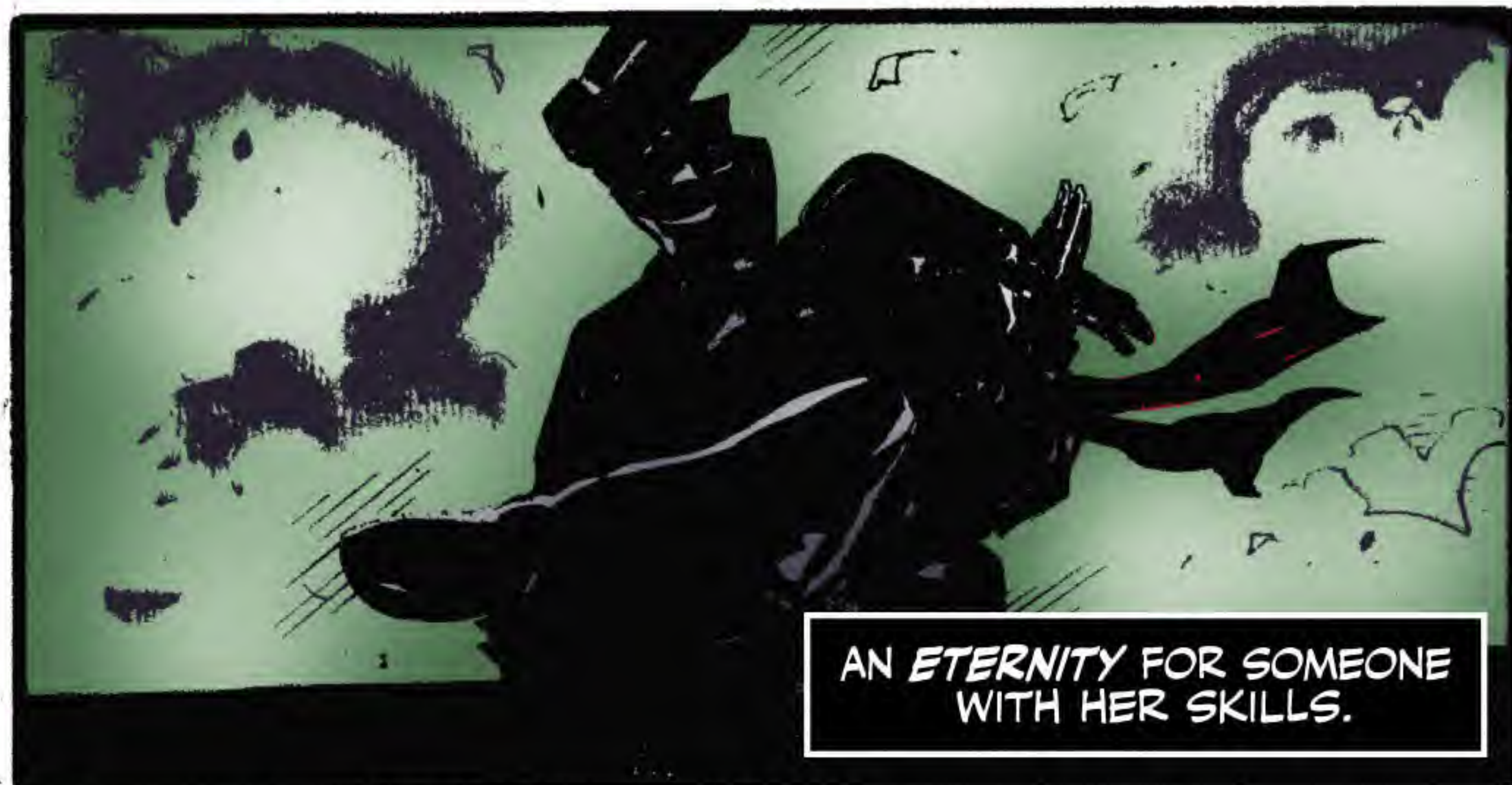
WHAT
THE--?!











THE BOX SCORE
WILL READ A WIN FOR
THE SHADOW.



MURDERER
APPREHENDED.



SMUGGLER
FOILED.



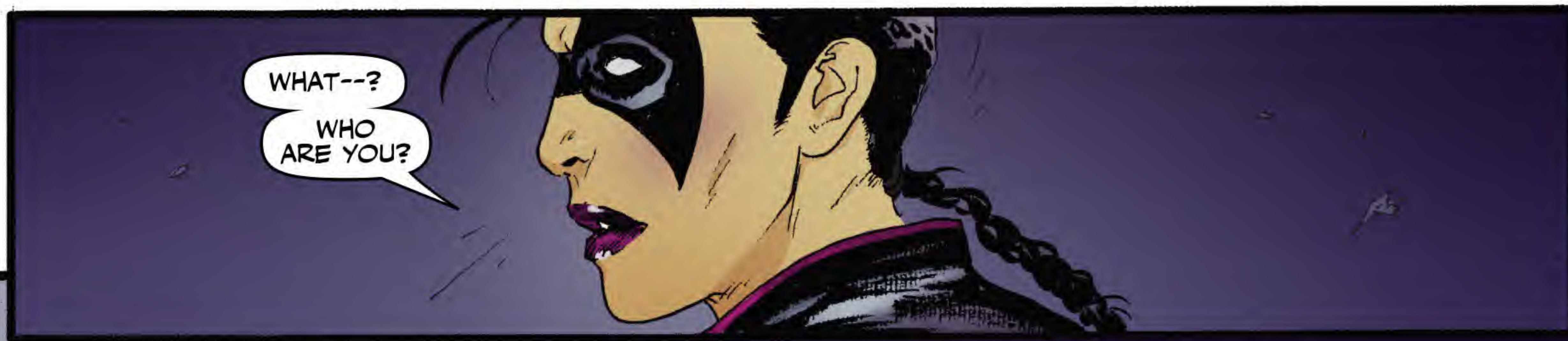
STOLEN PROPERTY
RECOVERED.



SO WHY DO I HEAR
FATE LAUGHING AT
ME AGAIN?



I SENT YOU A
LETTER ASKING YOU
TO WAIT. BUT I
GUESS I DON'T BLAME
YOU FOR BEING
IMPATIENT.



WHAT--?
WHO
ARE YOU?



HOPE YOU
DON'T MIND THAT
I TOSSED THAT LITTLE
SMOKE BOMB IN THERE,
BUT IT LOOKED LIKE
YOU WERE IN A
TIGHT SPOT.

OH, THEY
CALL ME *MISS
FURY* BY THE
WAY.



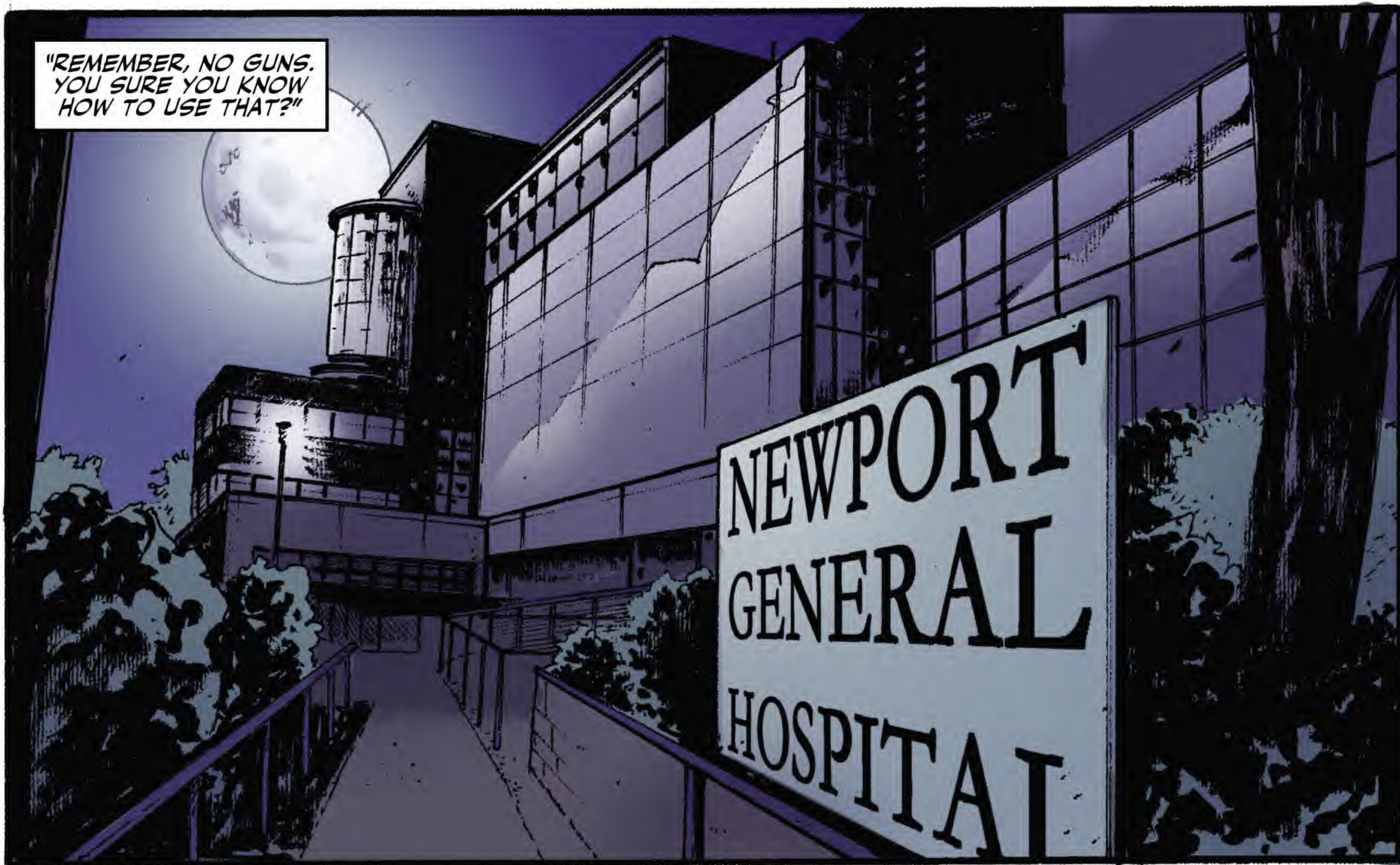
AND I HAVE A
BUSINESS PROPOSITION
THAT *MIGHT* INTEREST
YOU.



ISSUE 2



"REMEMBER, NO GUNS.
YOU SURE YOU KNOW
HOW TO USE THAT?"



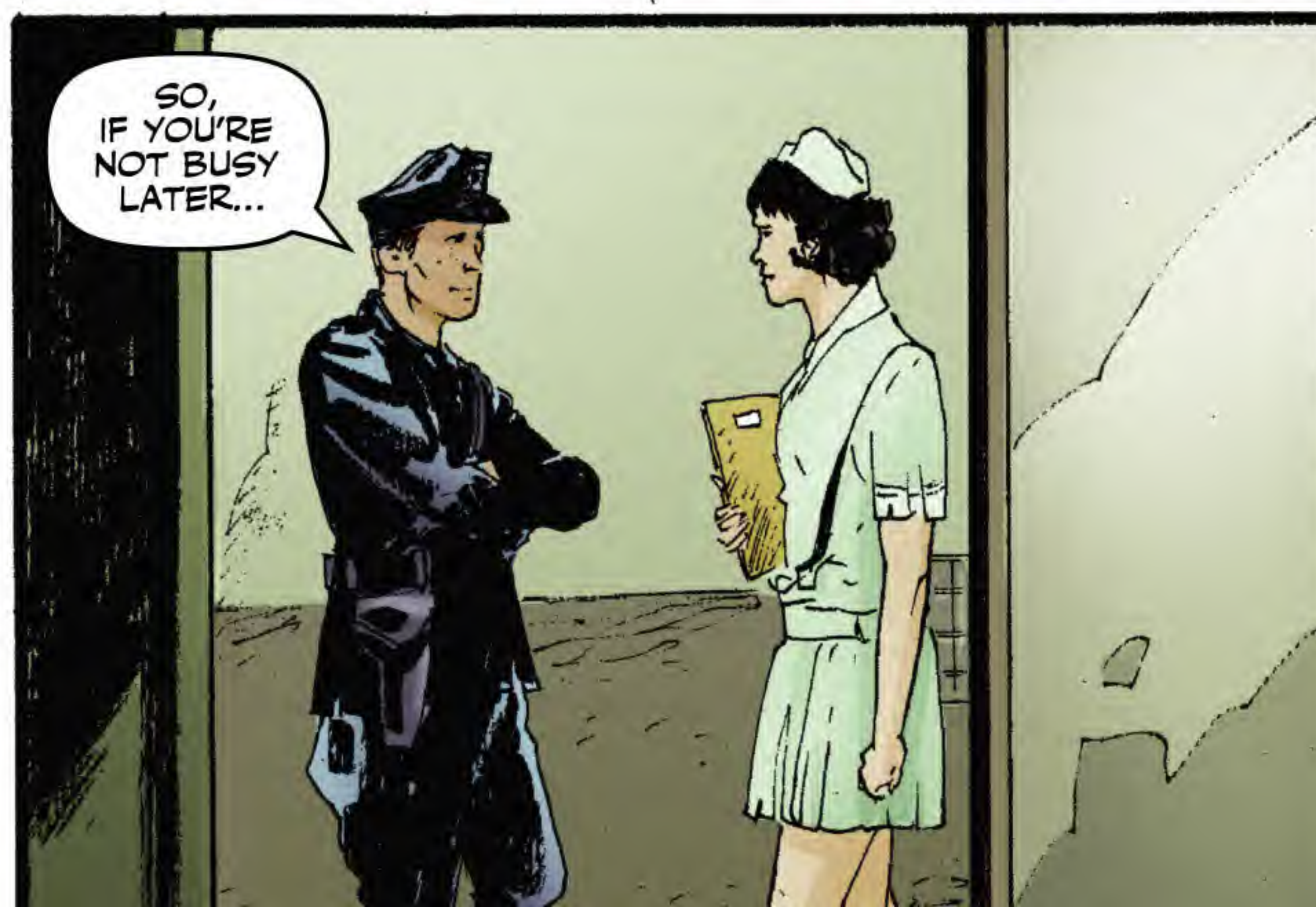
DON'T WORRY.
I'VE GOT THE
HANG OF IT.
WHICH FLOOR
AGAIN?



FIVE.

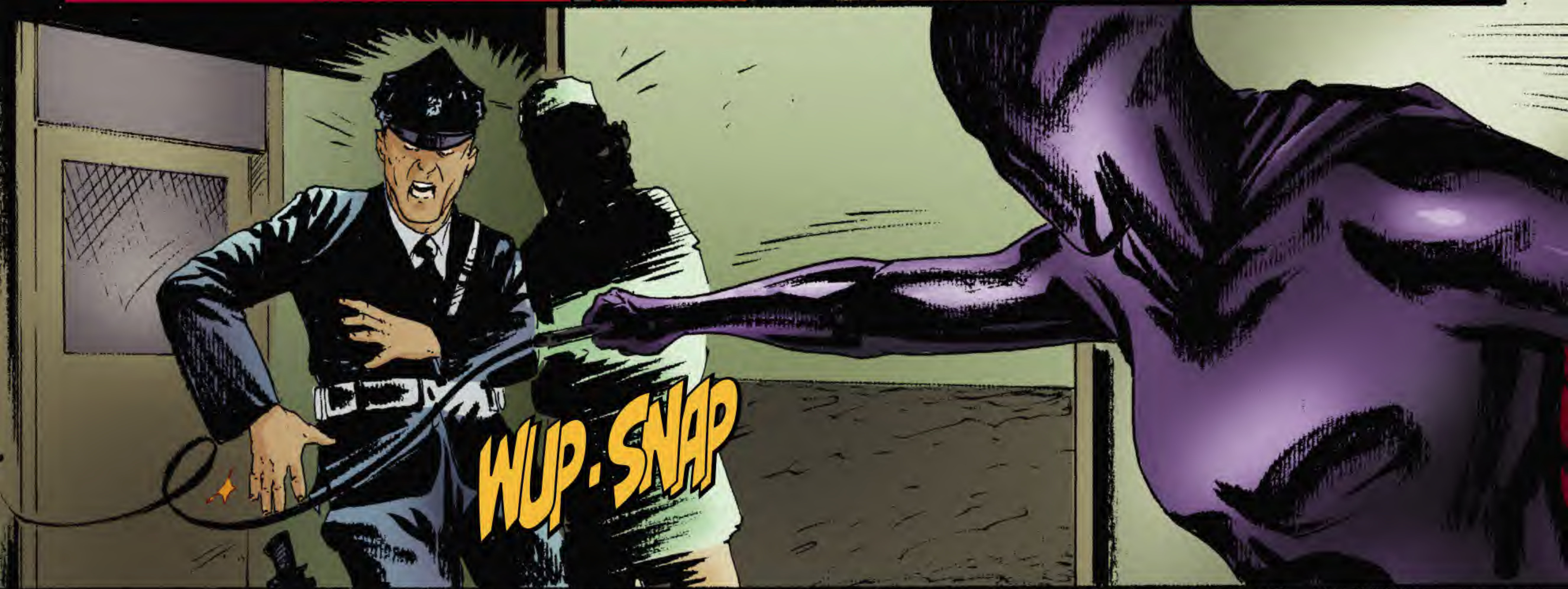


SO,
IF YOU'RE
NOT BUSY
LATER...



DING









THESE *ARE* FUN. I MUST ADD ONE TO MY TOY COLLECTION.

WELL, THAT'S MY *ONLY* SPARE WHIP, SO WHEN WE'RE DONE, GIVE IT BACK.



SO, I TOLD YOU HOW I BROKE INTO THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY TO STEAL THE MOON STONE.

KUDOS ON THAT, BY THE WAY. MIGHT TRY IT MYSELF SOMETIME. THAT PLACE IS *FULL* OF PRETTY SHINY THINGS.

YES. THANK YOU.

BUT WHAT I'D LIKE TO KNOW IS *WHY* WE NEED THE INDIAN.



STOMPCLOMPSTOMPCLOMP



CAN YOU TALK AND *FIGHT* AT THE SAME TIME?

OF COURSE. THEY'RE ONLY FLATFOOTS.





"...AT A TEDIOUS ALUMNI RECEPTION AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.



"MY FATHER HAD DONATED SCADS OF MONEY TO HIS ALMA MATER. AFTER HIS DEATH, I BECAME THE OBJECT OF ADMINISTRATIVE FAWNING.

"THEY NEED TO INVENT A NEW WORD FOR BORING.



"FAMILY OBLIGATION COMPLETE, I WAS READY TO MAKE MY ESCAPE...

"WHEN A RANDOM BIT OF CONVERSATION PLUCKED AT MY CURIOSITY."

ACTUALLY, MY ANCESTORS CLAIM TO HAVE DISCOVERED AMERICA BEFORE COLUMBUS. IF YOU BELIEVE THE TALL TALES ABOUT THE TEMPLARS THAT IS.



I COULDN'T HELP OVERHEARING YOUR FASCINATING COMMENTS.

I HAVE EDMUND'S JOURNAL, WRITTEN IN HIS OWN HAND, SOMETHING OF A FAMILY HEIRLOOM. MOST PEOPLE THINK IT'S A FAKE, BUT IT MAKES FOR CRACKING GOOD CONVERSATION.

"HE TOLD ME HIS ANCESTOR HAD BEEN SIR EDMUND PEMBROKE-- THE KNIGHT WHO'D ALLEGEDLY LED THE EXPEDITION TO AMERICA."

I'D LOVE TO READ THIS JOURNAL.

I'M SURE WE CAN SET UP AN APPOINTMENT SOMETIME TO--

HOW ABOUT NOW?

UH...WELL, I'M SUPPOSED TO MEET MY WIFE AFTER THIS AND...UH...

"HE DIDN'T MEET
HIS WIFE, CALLED HER
WITH AN EXCUSE.



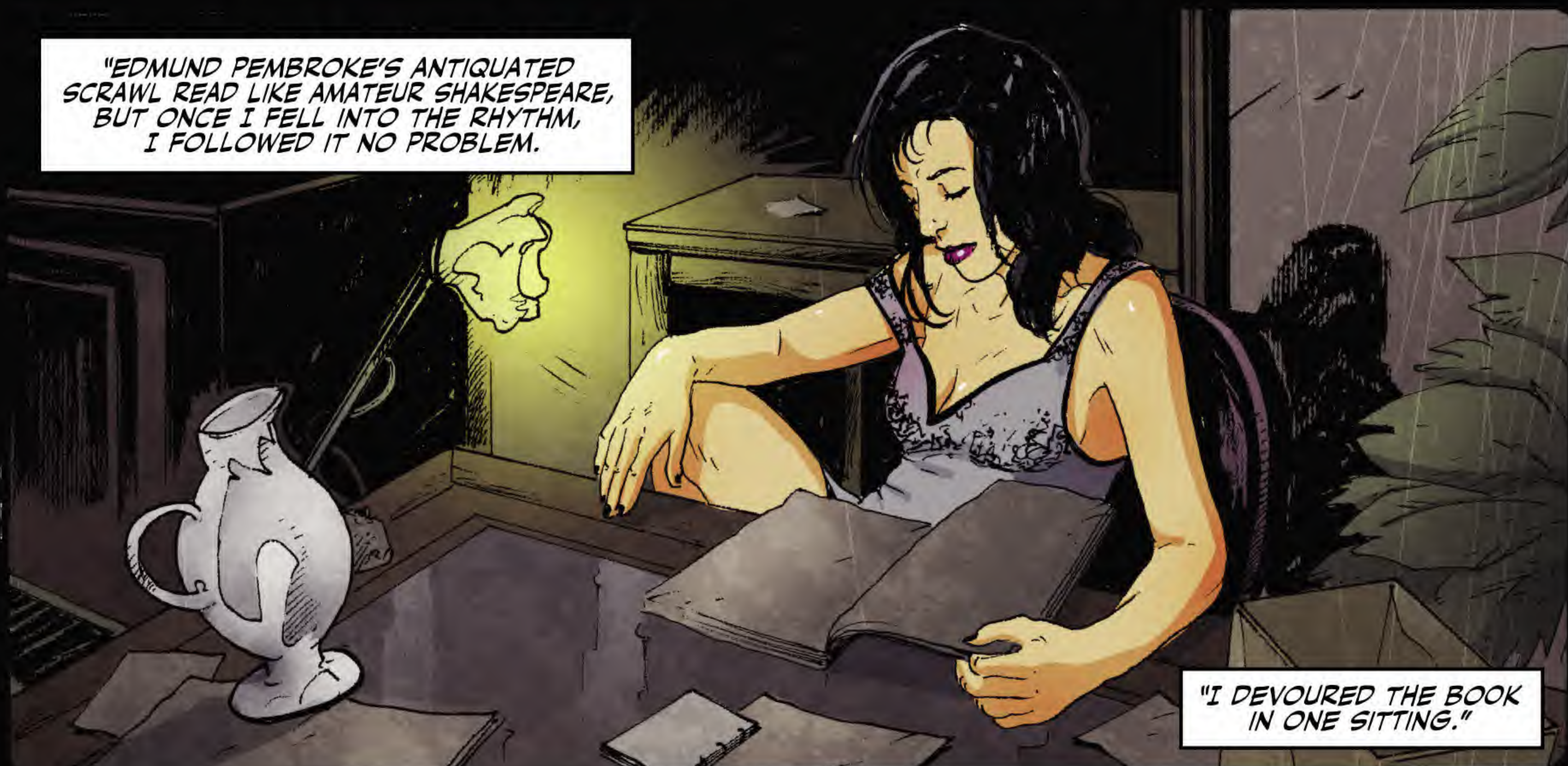
"HE BALKED WHEN I ASKED
TO BORROW THE JOURNAL.
IT WAS, AFTER ALL,
IRREPLACEABLE.



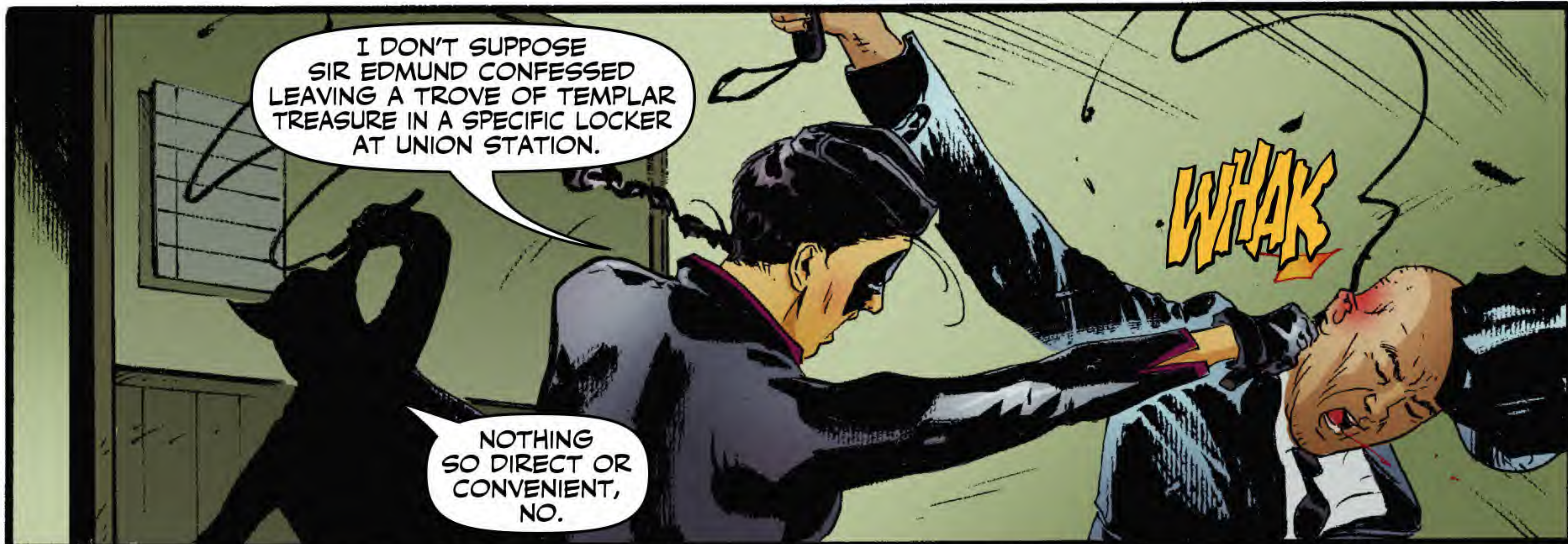
"NO PROBLEM. I WOULD JUST
STOP BY HIS HOME UNANNOUNCED
TO SEE THE JOURNAL, AND IF HE
DIDN'T HAPPEN TO BE THERE IT WOULD
GIVE ME THE CHANCE TO MEET
HIS LOVELY WIFE.

"HE ARRANGED TO DELIVER
THE JOURNAL THE NEXT DAY.

"EDMUND PEMBROKE'S ANTIQUATED
SCRAWL READ LIKE AMATEUR SHAKESPEARE,
BUT ONCE I FELL INTO THE RHYTHM,
I FOLLOWED IT NO PROBLEM.



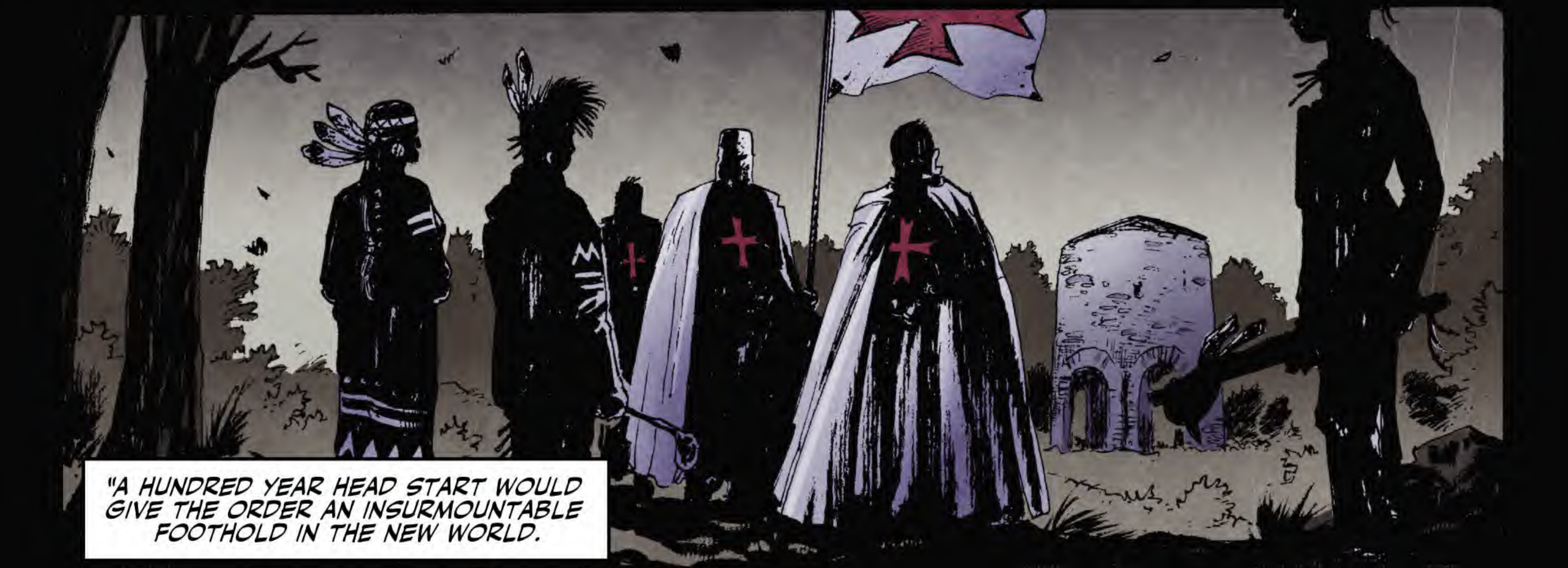
"I DEVoured THE BOOK
IN ONE SITTING."



"THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR WERE A POWERFUL ORDER AND AMBITIOUS, AND THE SCOPE OF THEIR AMBITION SPANNED DECADES. CENTURIES."



"A HUNDRED YEAR HEAD START WOULD GIVE THE ORDER AN INSURMOUNTABLE FOOTHOLD IN THE NEW WORLD."



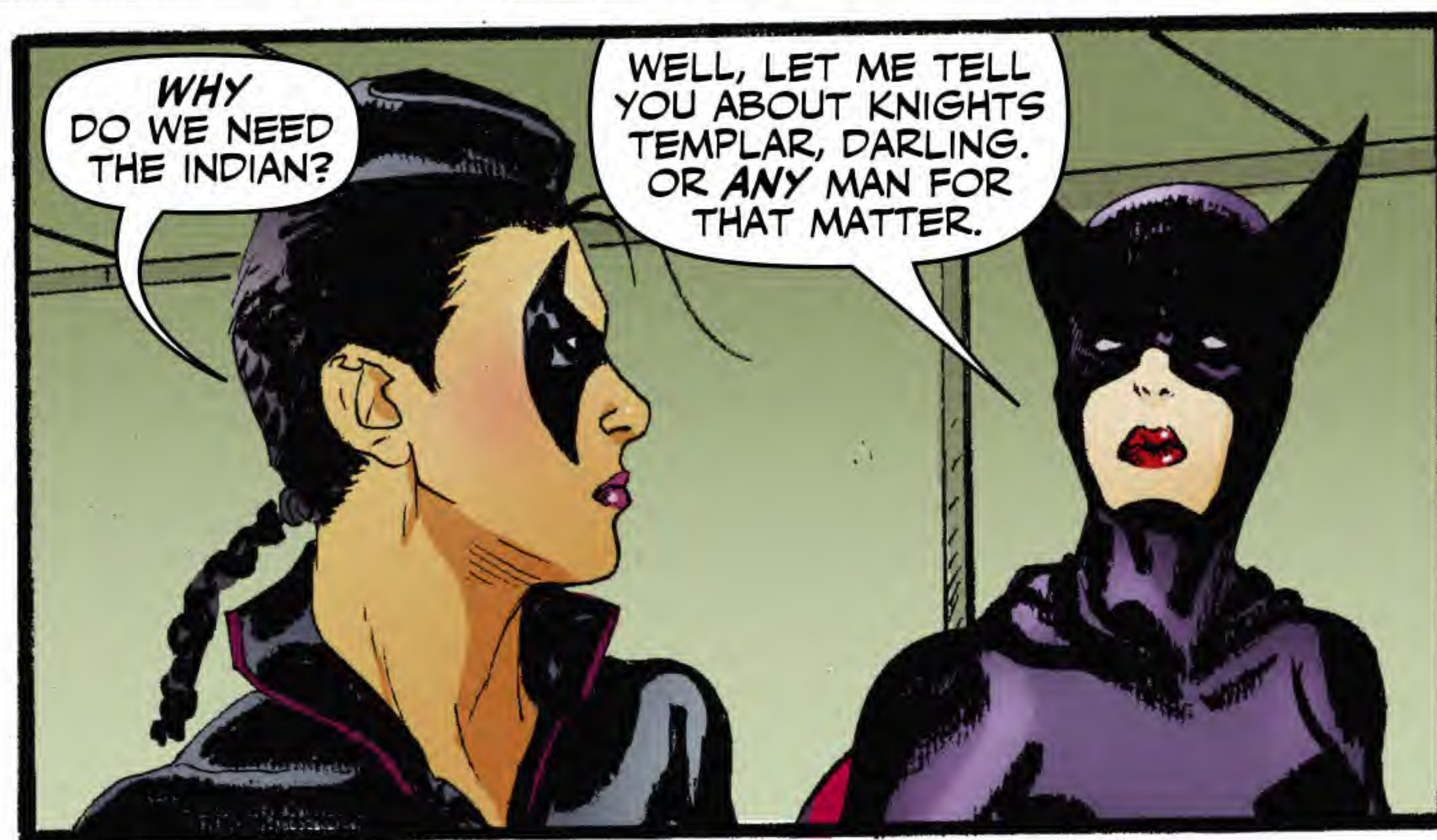
"BUT EDMUND KNEW ALL OF HIS HARDWORK COULD BE UNDONE. THE NEXT WAVE OF TEMPLARS MIGHT NOT COME FOR A DECADE OR MORE."



"EDMUND NEEDED TO SEAL THE DEAL, NEEDED TO MAKE SURE SOMEBODY WATCHED OVER TEMPLAR INTERESTS WHILE HE WAS A WAY."



"A MARRIAGE TO THE CHIEF'S DAUGHTER SEEMED THE PERFECT SOLUTION."





WHEN THEY'VE BEEN ON LONG OCEAN VOYAGES FAR FROM HOME, IT'S ONLY NATURAL THEY'D GET MORE **RANDY** THAN USUAL.

AND CONSIDER THAT SIR EDMUND WAS A NEWLYWED.



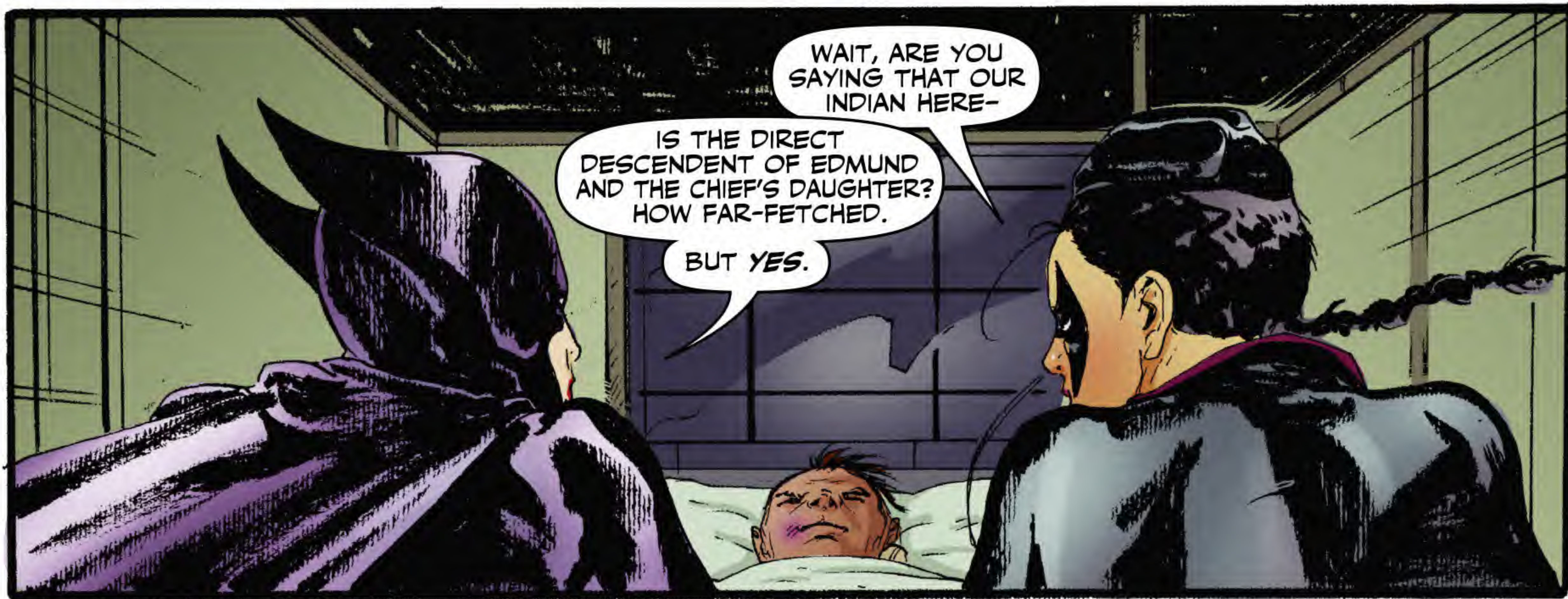
COME ON! AFTER 'EM!



SO IT WOULDN'T BE A SURPRISE IF EDMUND GOT DOWN TO SOME **SERIOUS** BABY MAKING.

BLAM

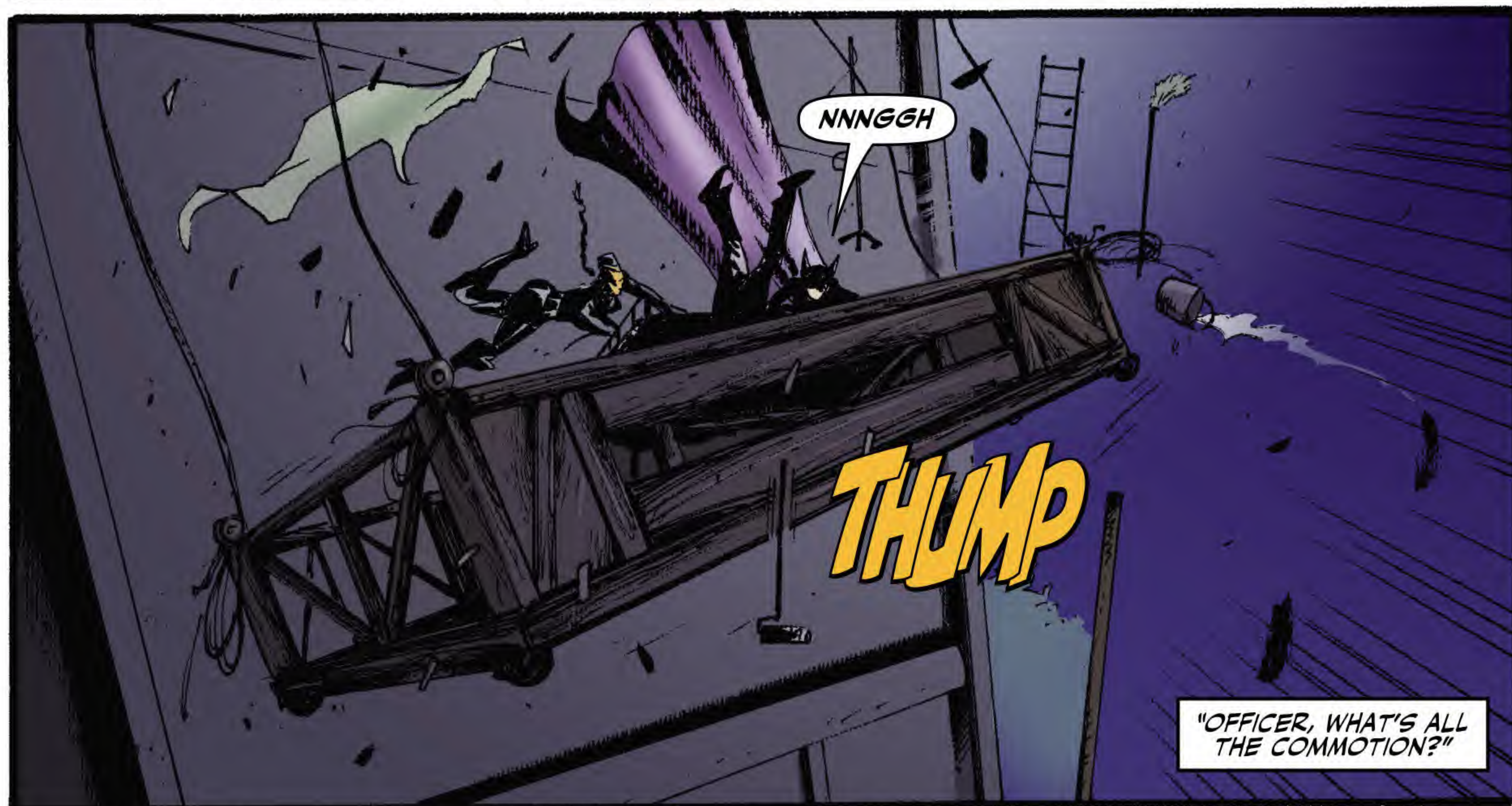
BLAM



WAIT, ARE YOU SAYING THAT OUR INDIAN HERE-

IS THE DIRECT DESCENDENT OF EDMUND AND THE CHIEF'S DAUGHTER? HOW FAR-FETCHED.

BUT **YES**.





THERE'S SOME KIND OF DISTURBANCE WITH THE OTHER PRISONER.

ARE WE **SAFE** HERE?

WE'VE GOT IT COVERED, MR. ENFIELD. I SUGGEST YOU SEE TO YOUR CLIENT.



WHAT IS IT?

SOMETHING WITH THAT INDIAN.



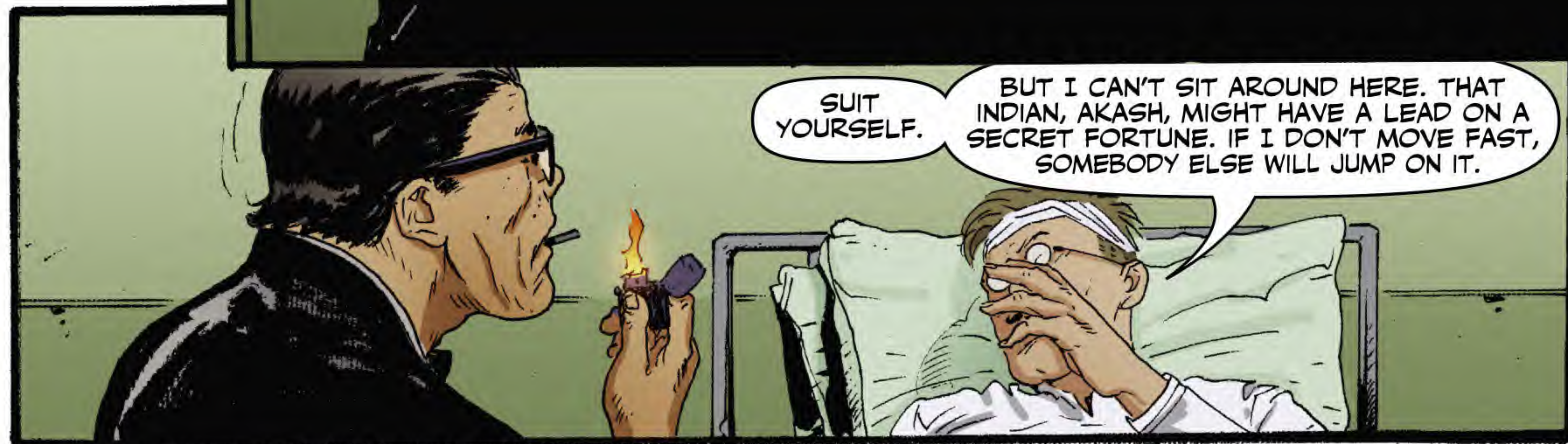
NEVER MIND THAT. HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

BETTER.



WRONG ANSWER. AS SOON AS YOU'RE BETTER THEY'LL MOVE YOU TO THE JAIL. BAD FOOD AND NO PRETTY NURSES. SO STAY HURT. I'M YOUR LAWYER. LISTEN TO ME.

OKAY IF I SMOKE?

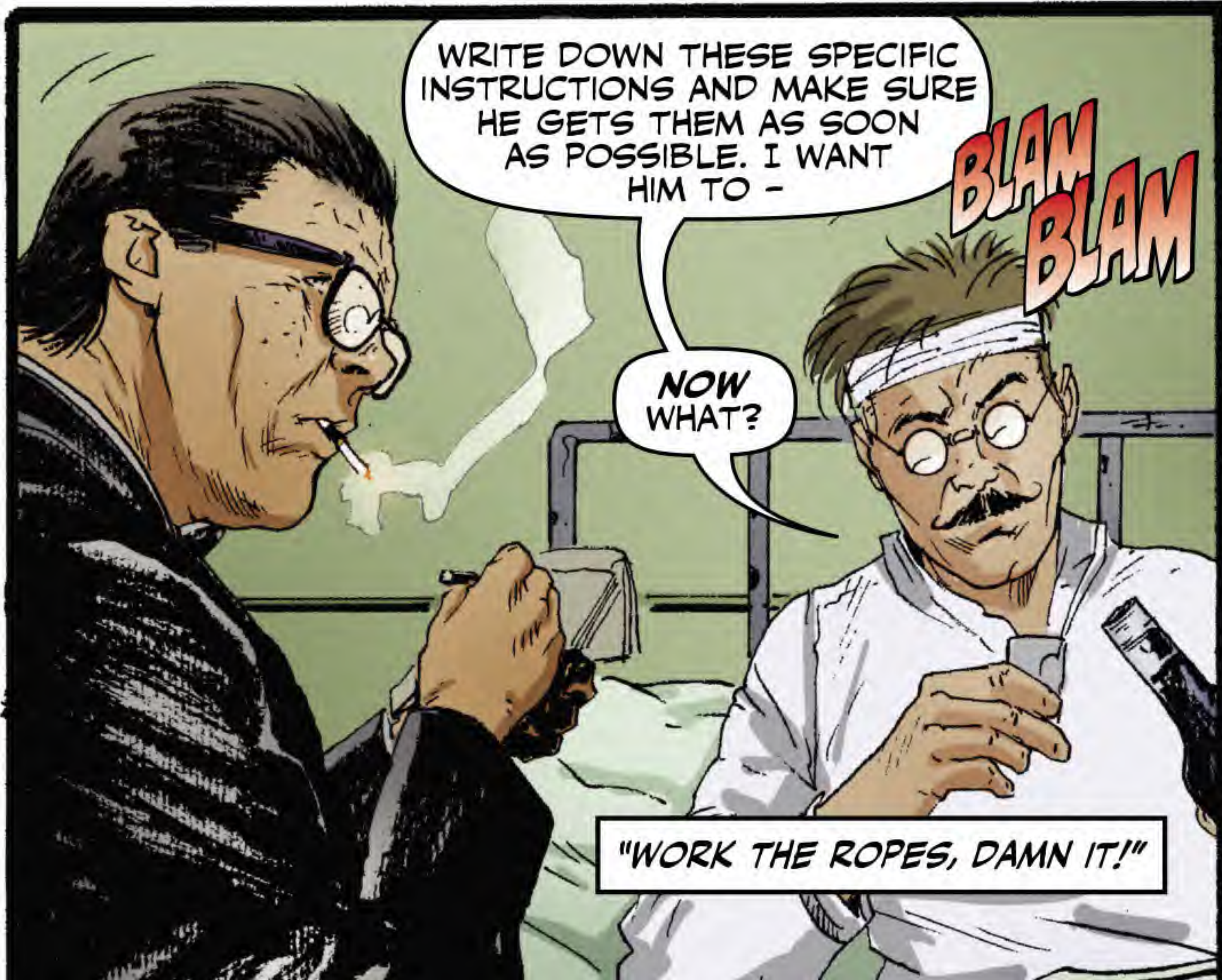


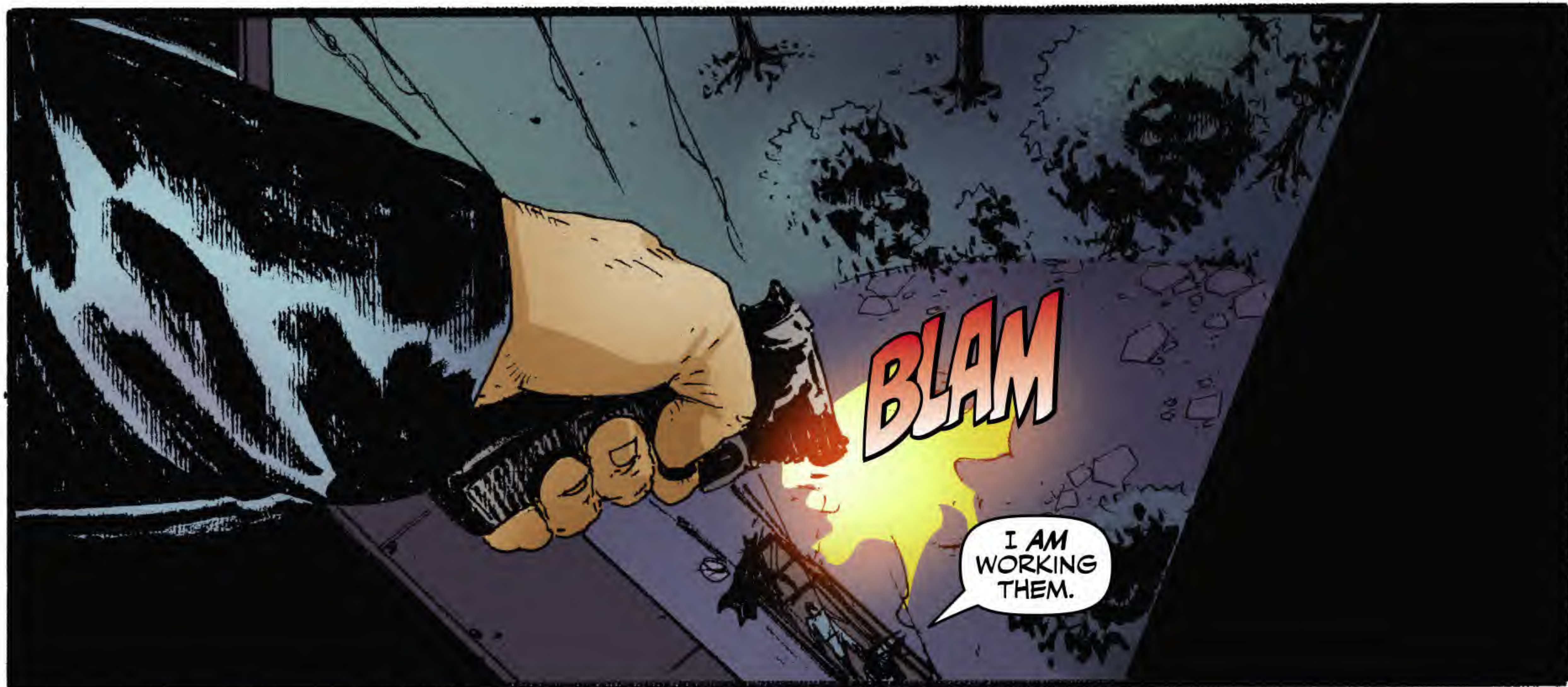
SUIT YOURSELF.

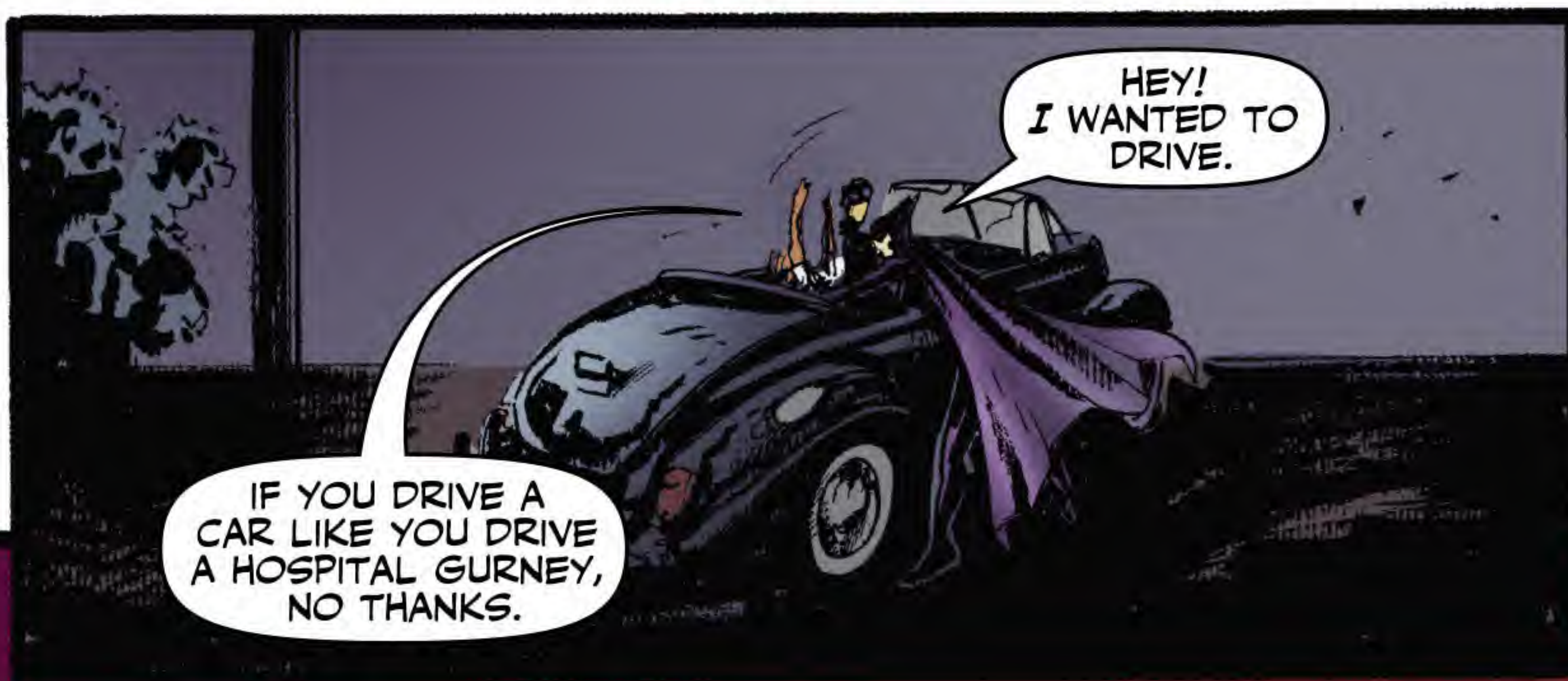
BUT I CAN'T SIT AROUND HERE. THAT INDIAN, AKASH, MIGHT HAVE A LEAD ON A SECRET FORTUNE. IF I DON'T MOVE FAST, SOMEBODY ELSE WILL JUMP ON IT.

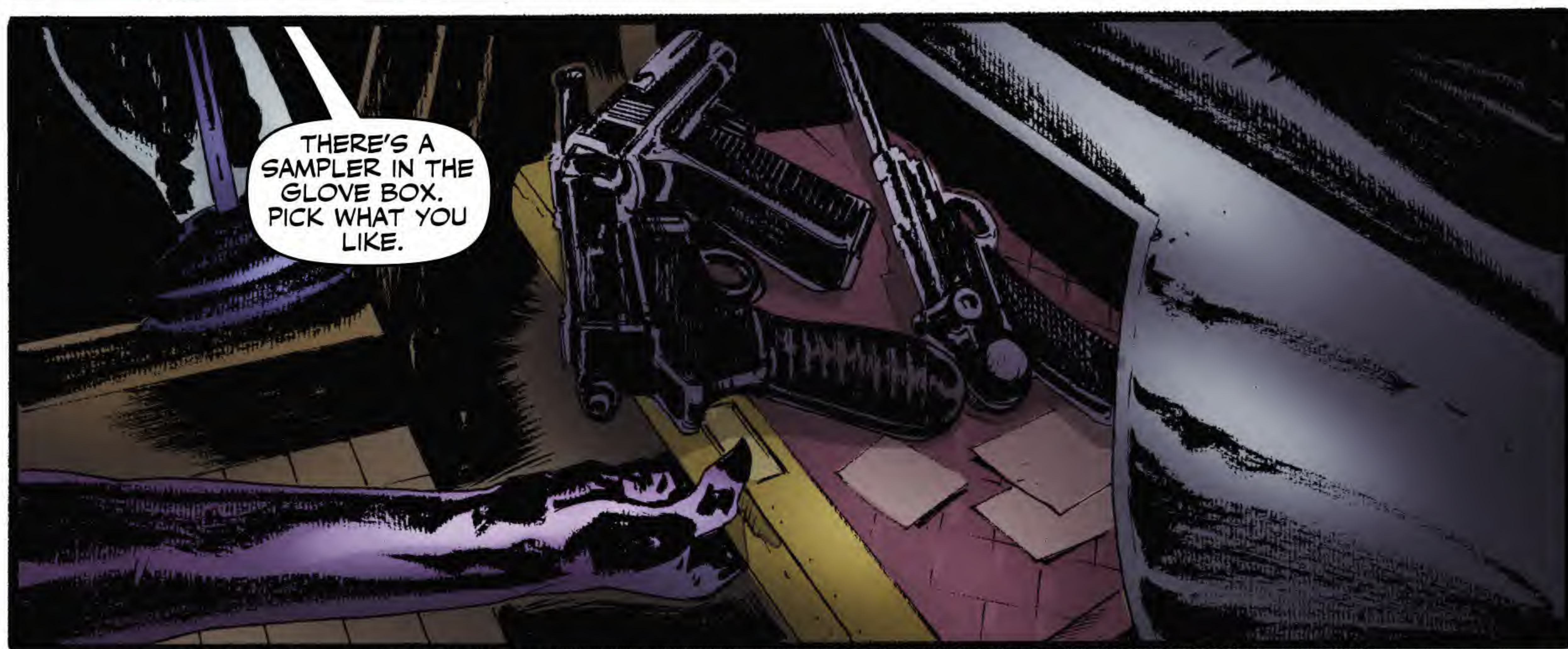


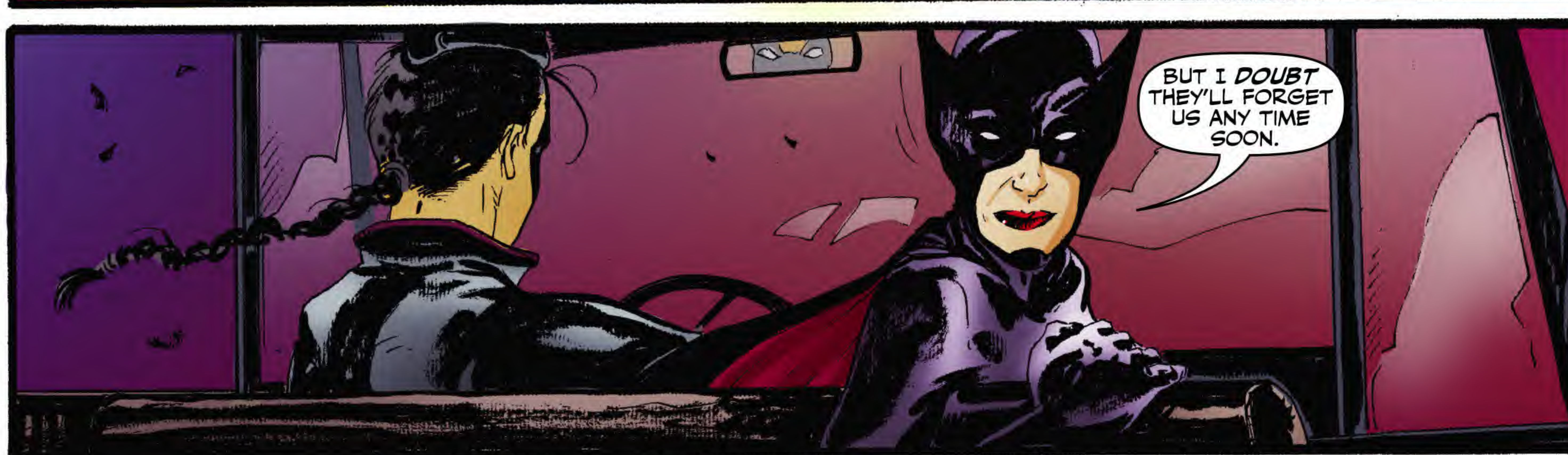
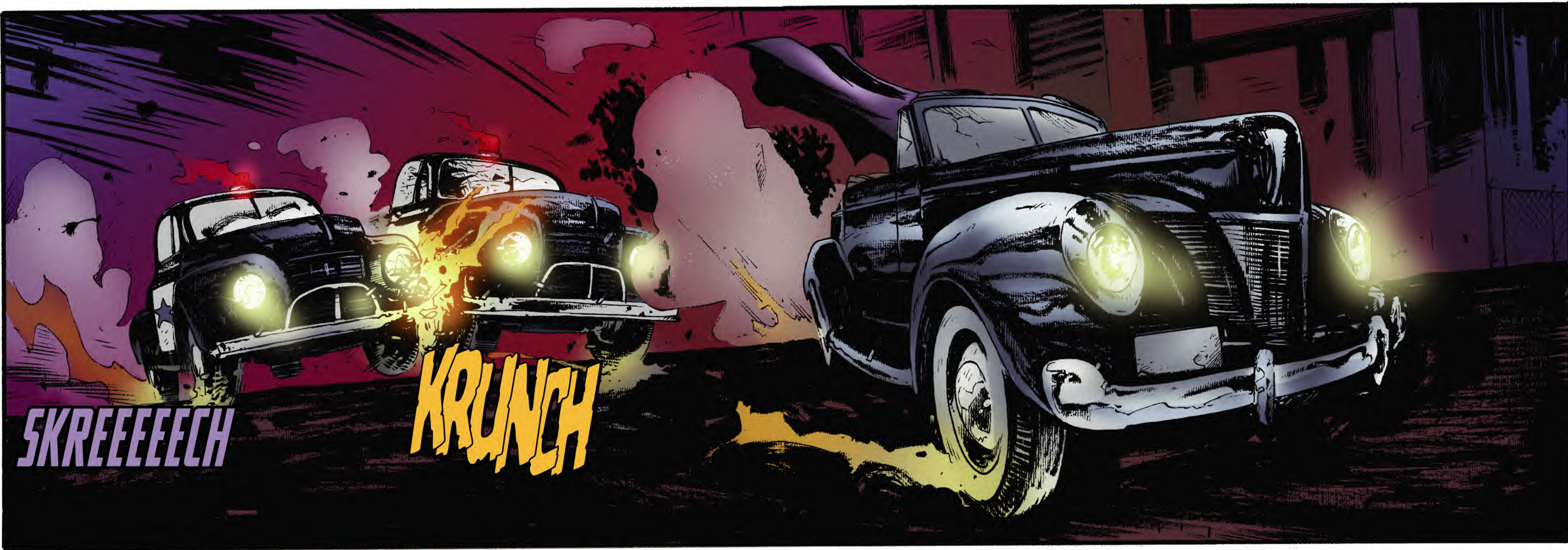
I CAN ARRANGE A BAIL HEARING IF YOU LIKE, GUSTAV, BUT IT'LL TAKE TIME.













RIGHT THIS WAY, SIR. I'LL TELL MISTER ARGUS YOU'VE ARRIVED.



WELL, IF IT ISN'T SAL ENFIELD, MY BROTHER'S MOUTHPIECE.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN RHODE ISLAND PULLING HIS FEEBLE ASS OUT OF SOME JAM OR ANOTHER.



ER, YES. I TOOK THE FIRST FLIGHT BACK AND CAME STRAIGHT HERE.

HIS JAM IS ACTUALLY WHAT I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT.



WALK AND TALK, PLEASE. YOU'VE CAUGHT ME IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING.

IS GUSTAV GOING TO THE BIG HOUSE THIS TIME? ONE OF HIS LITTLE SCHEMES FINALLY BACKFIRED?

A CLEAR CASE OF SELF-DEFENSE. MR. ARGUS TOOK A STROLL THROUGH THE PARK TO SEE THE HISTORIC TOWER AND THAT MAD INDIAN ATTACKED HIM.

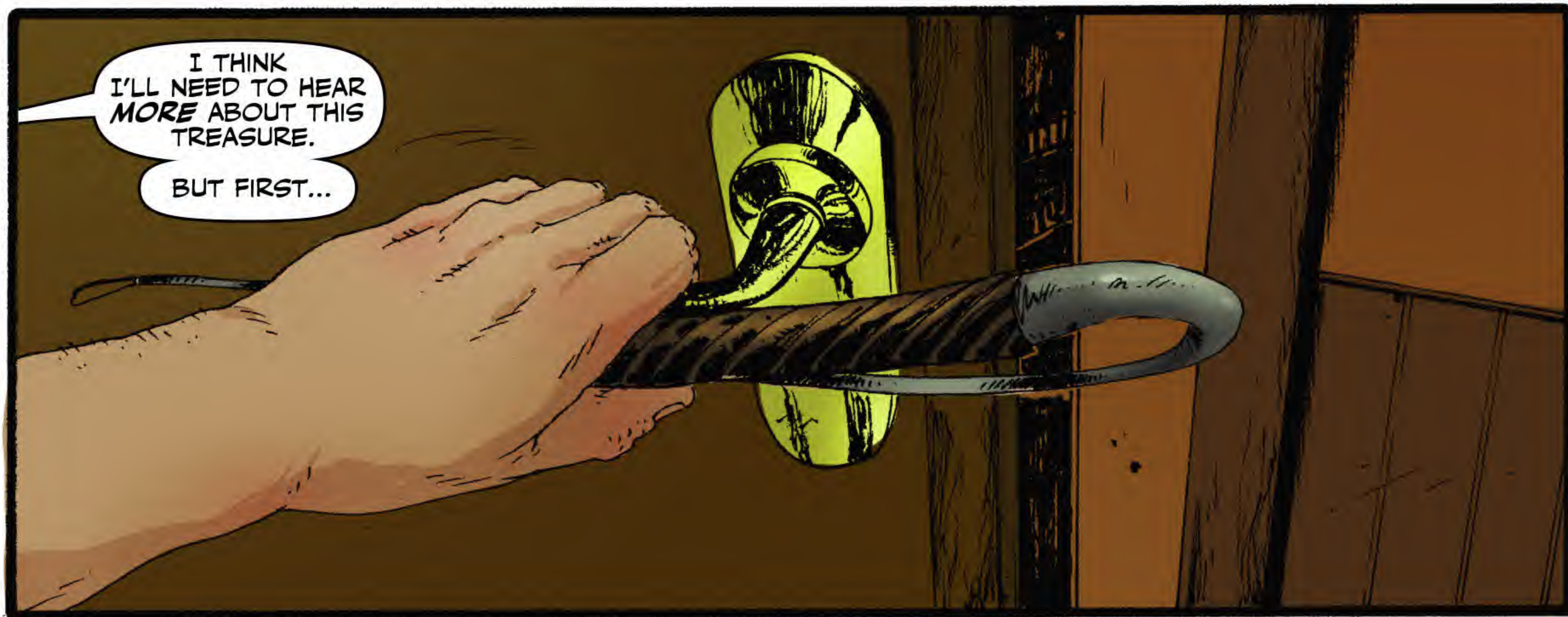


BUT THE WHEELS OF JUSTICE GRIND SLOWLY, AND GUSTAV IS CONCERNED THAT, IN THE MEANTIME, SOMEBODY ELSE MIGHT GET TO THE TREASURE.



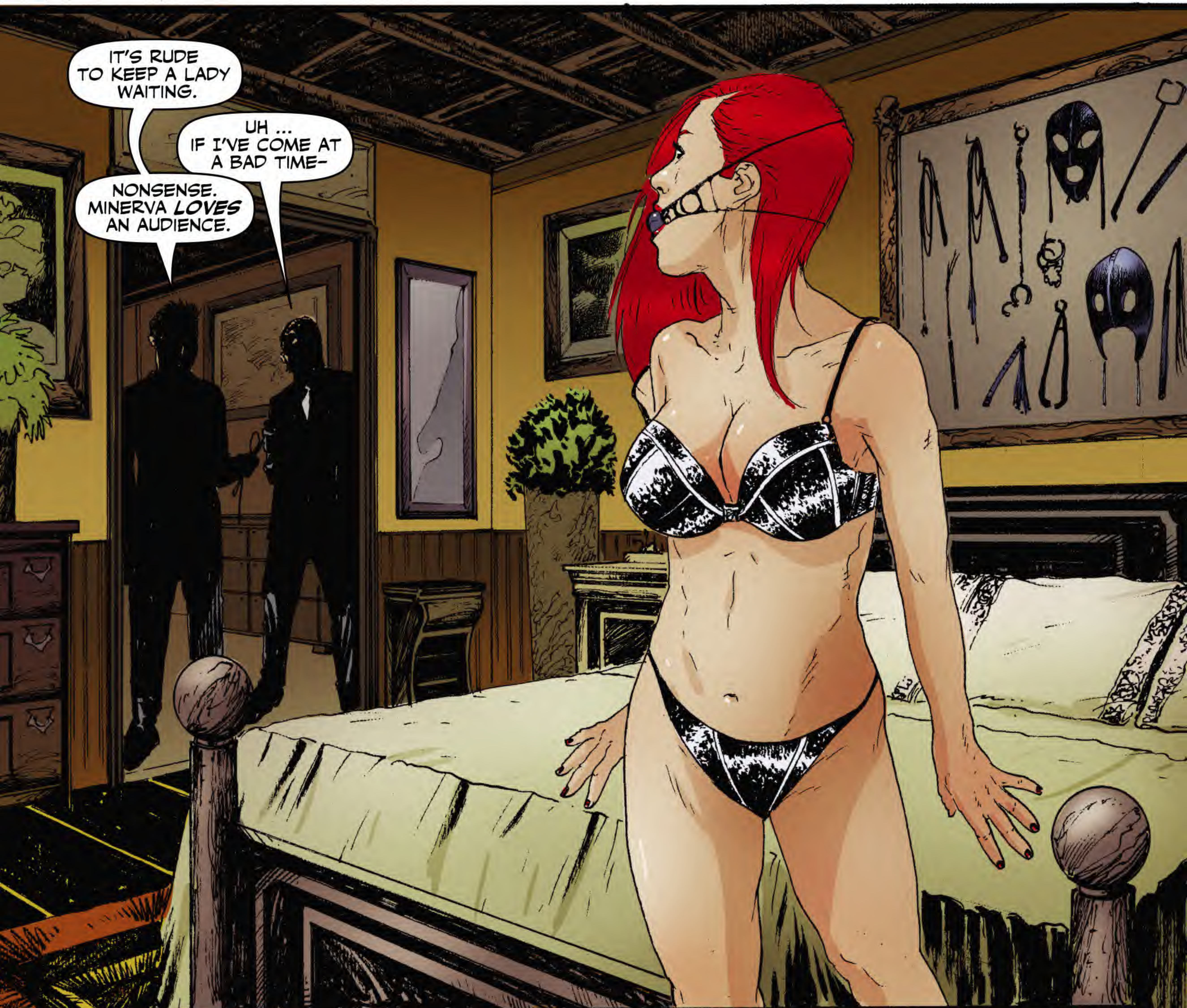
TREASURE?

YOU INTEREST ME STRANGELY, ENFIELD.



I THINK
I'LL NEED TO HEAR
MORE ABOUT THIS
TREASURE.

BUT FIRST...



IT'S RUDE
TO KEEP A LADY
WAITING.

UH ...
IF I'VE COME AT
A BAD TIME-

NONSENSE.
MINERVA **LOVES**
AN AUDIENCE.



IS SHE...DOES SHE
WANT TO BE TIED UP
LIKE THAT?



MY DEAR MISTER ENFIELD, I THINK YOU'D
BE SURPRISED AT ALL THE WICKED THINGS
PEOPLE ENJOY IN THIS WORLD.

SOME
ENJOY BEING
TIED...



"AND OTHERS ENJOY
DOING THE TYING."

WHAAAAA ...?

WHERE
AM I?



WHAT
THE HELL IS
HAPPENING?!

GOOD.
YOU'RE AWAKE.
WE WERE GETTING
BORED.



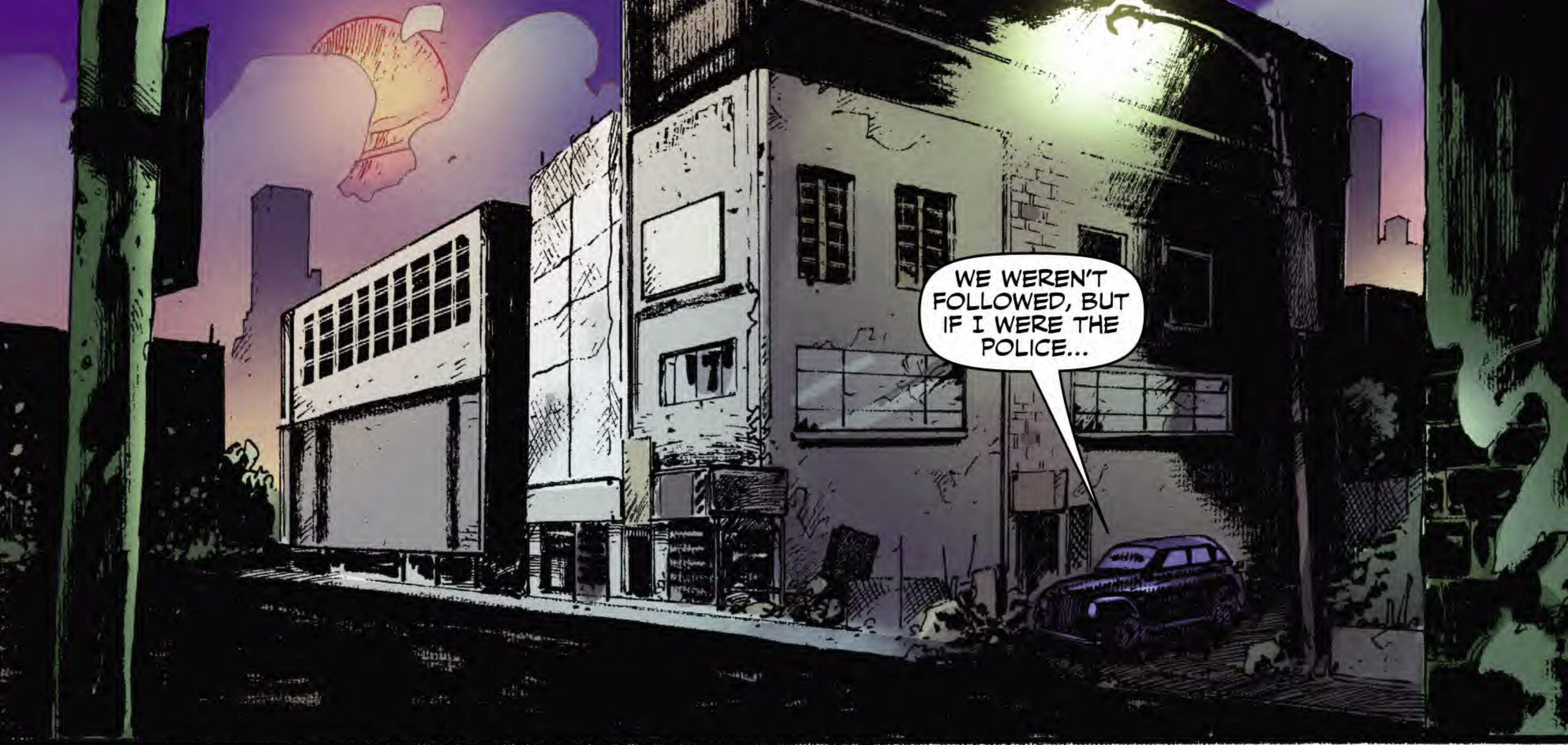
NOW WE'RE GOING TO ASK YOU
SOME QUESTIONS. AND IF THE ANSWERS
DON'T RESULT IN A BIG PILE
OF TREASURE ...

I PLAY
CROQUET WITH
YOUR BALLS.



ISSUE 3







I DON'T
KNOW THE TWO
LADIES.

SIDEKICKS?

I DOUBT IT.
DIFFICULT TO SEE
FROM HERE BUT I THINK
ONE OF THEM HAD A
GUN ON HIM.



AH, THE
COMPETITION
THEN.

MY
BROTHER DID
MENTION THERE
WERE OTHER
PLAYERS.

WELL, IT
WOULDN'T BE
ANY FUN IF IT
WERE *TOO*
EASY.



YOU THINK
THEY CAN FIND WHAT
WE COULDN'T?

I WOULD IMAGINE SO.
THE MOHAWK'S THE ONE
WHO HID IT, ISN'T HE?

WE'RE GOING
DOWN THERE,
I SUPPOSE.



OF COURSE.
GUNS OR KNIVES
TODAY? YOUR CHOICE,
MINERVA.

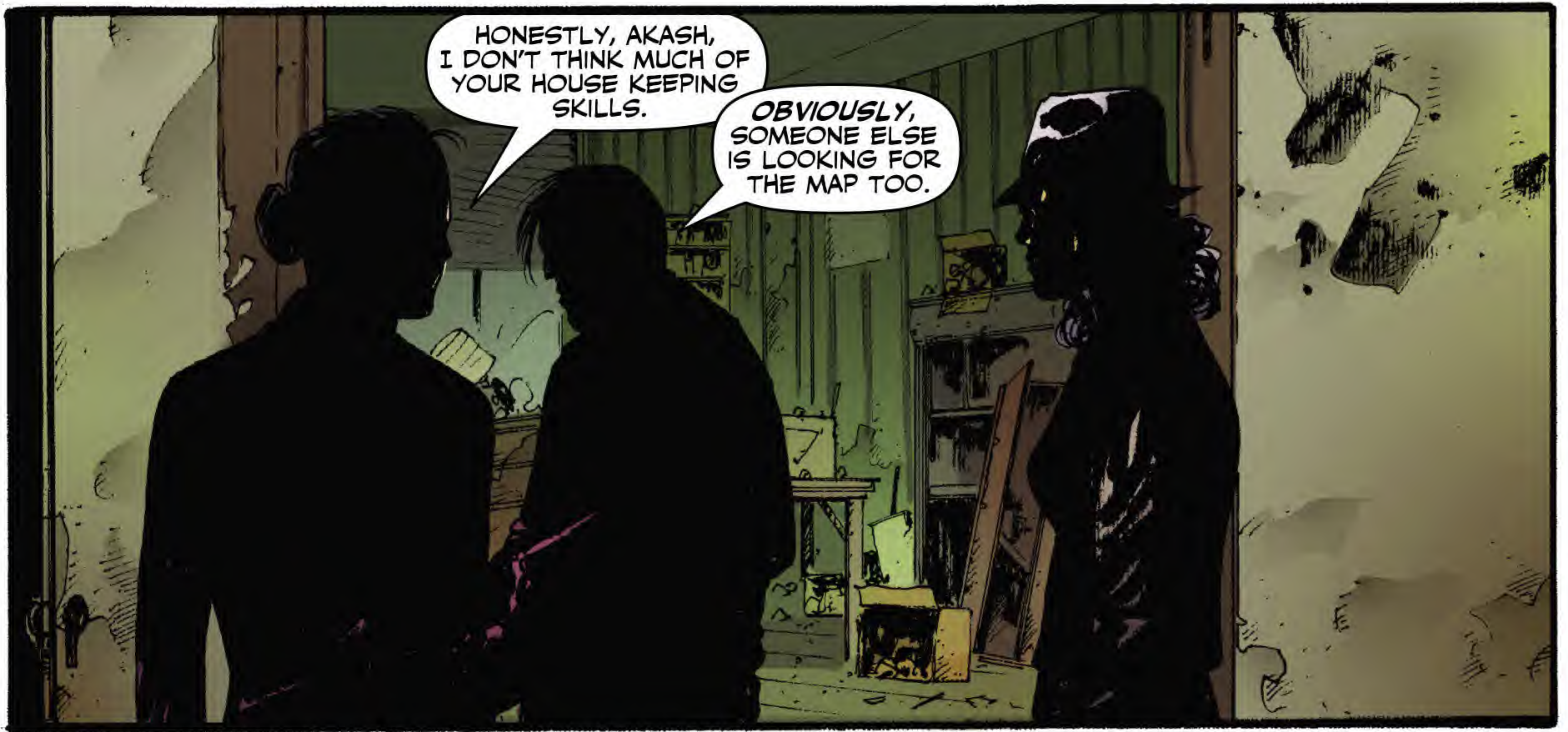
GUNS. THIS
IS A NEW DRESS,
AND I DON'T WANT
A LOT OF BLOOD
SPLATTER.



YOU'RE
LOOKING UP MY
DRESS, AREN'T
YOU?

YES.

"LOOKS A FRIGHTFUL
MESS, DOESN'T IT?"



HONESTLY, AKASH,
I DON'T THINK MUCH OF
YOUR HOUSE KEEPING
SKILLS.

OBVIOUSLY,
SOMEONE ELSE
IS LOOKING FOR
THE MAP TOO.



I DON'T
LIKE THIS.

YOU TWO FETCH
THE MAP. I'M HAVING
A LOOK AROUND.



AH, GOOD.
WHOEVER IT WAS
THAT TORE UP THE
PLACE DIDN'T FIND
THIS.

SPEED IT UP.
I DON'T WANT TO
HANG AROUND FOR
SURPRISES.



SO
YOU DON'T LIKE
SURPRISES.



BAP



GLAD YOU
HAVE A LITTLE
SPUNK IN YOU,
YOUNG MAN, BUT
WE DON'T HAVE
TIME TO PLAY.

SO
LET'S TRY IT
AGAIN.



YOUR HAND
GOES BACK INTO THE
HIDEY HOLE.

AND IF IT
COMES OUT
WITH ANYTHING
BUT A MAP, WE
SEE HOW FAR
YOUR BRAINS FLY
ACROSS THE
ROOM WHEN
I PULL THE
TRIGGER.



AH.
COME TO
MAMA.

YES, *VERY*
INTERESTING, BUT
WHERE IS IT?
A VALLEY. A LAKE.
A WATERFALL...

WE'LL NEED
TO DISCUSS THIS
FURTHER, AKASH.
I'M SURE YOU'LL BE
FORTHCOMING NOW
THAT YOU REALIZE
WHAT A MARVELOUS
MOTIVATOR IT IS TO
HAVE A *GUN* TO
YOUR HEAD.



OH,
I QUITE
AGREE.



OH.
HELLO.

YOU'RE
QUITE *STEALTHY*,
MISTER...?

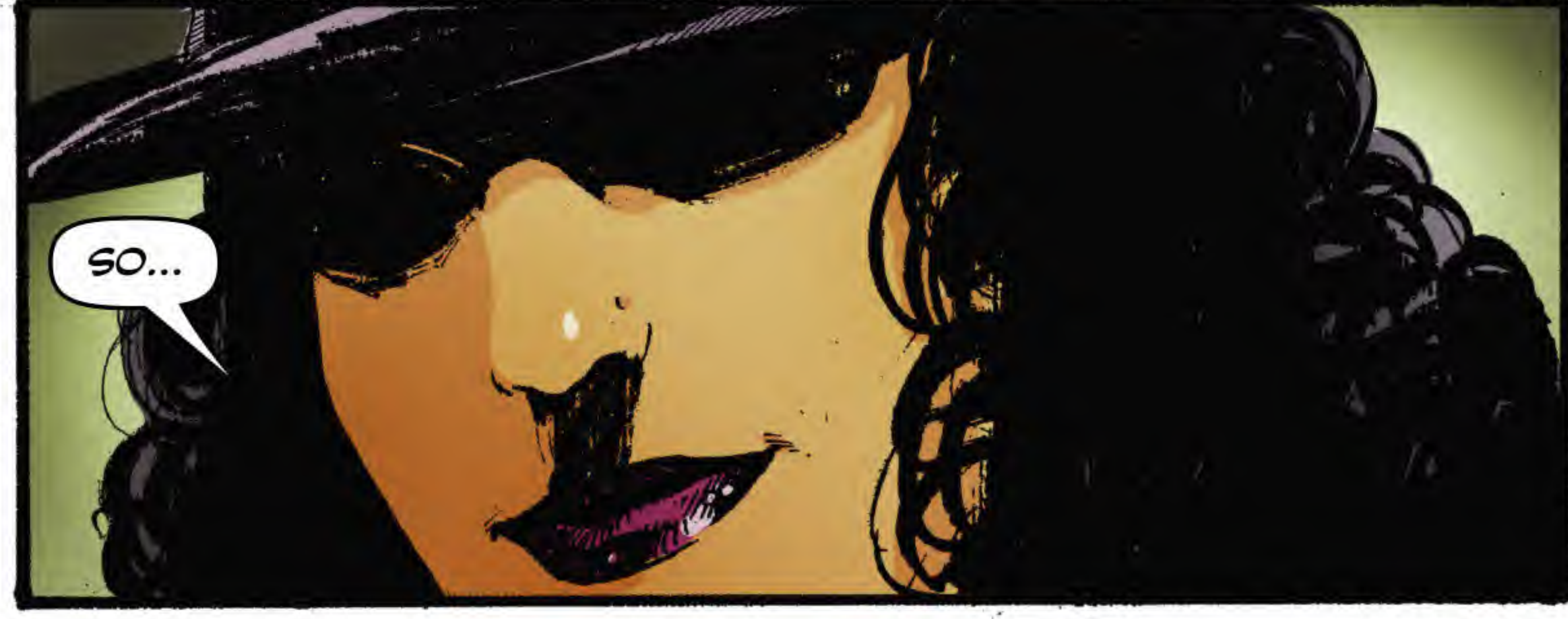


I'VE BEEN ON
THE HUNT WITH
ORLANDO IN
INDIA.

HE STALKED
A TIGER IN THE
TALL GRASS ALL
ALONE.

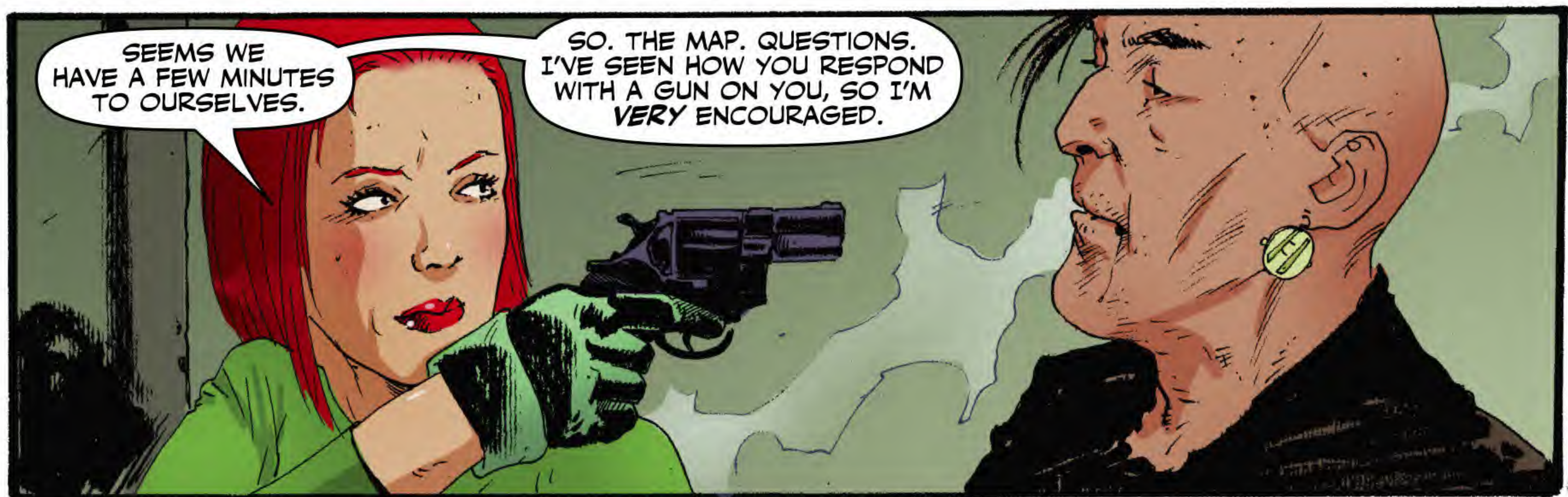
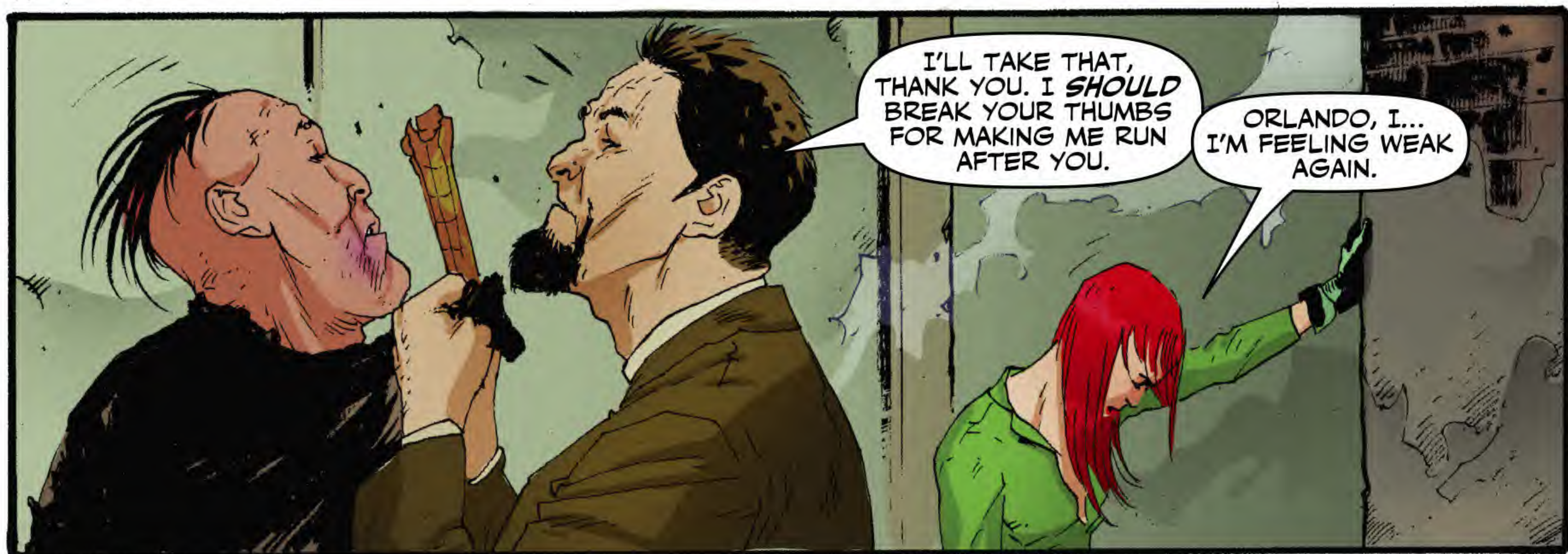


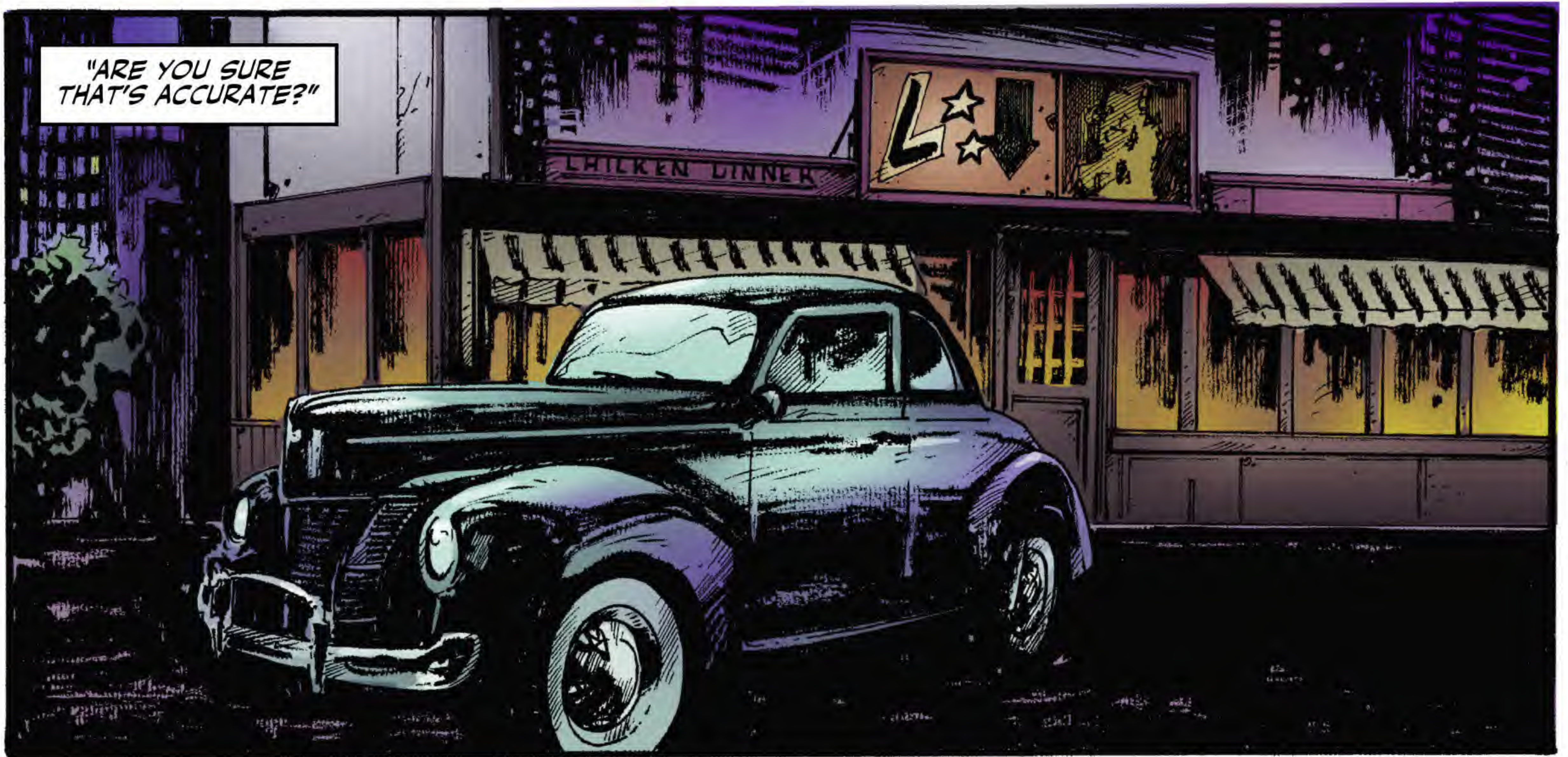
IT'S MY
UNDERSTANDING
THAT THE TALL
GRASS IS WHERE
THE *SNAKES*
ARE.



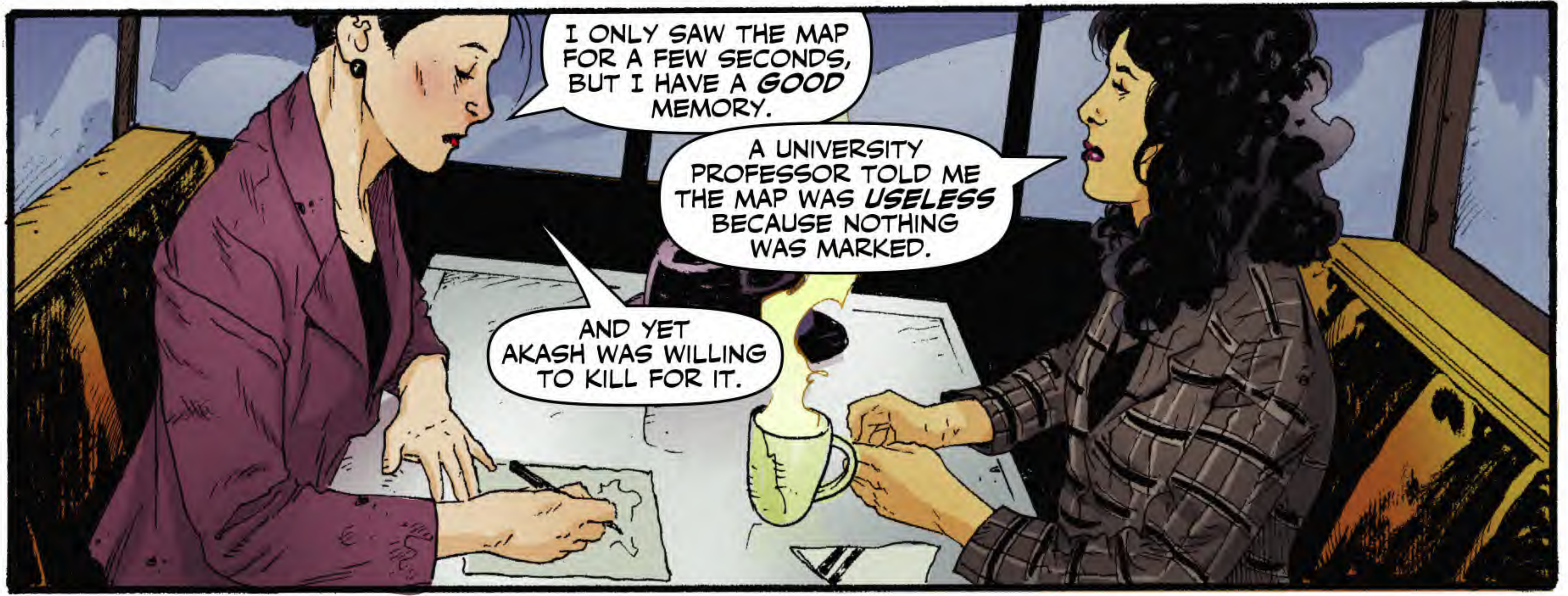








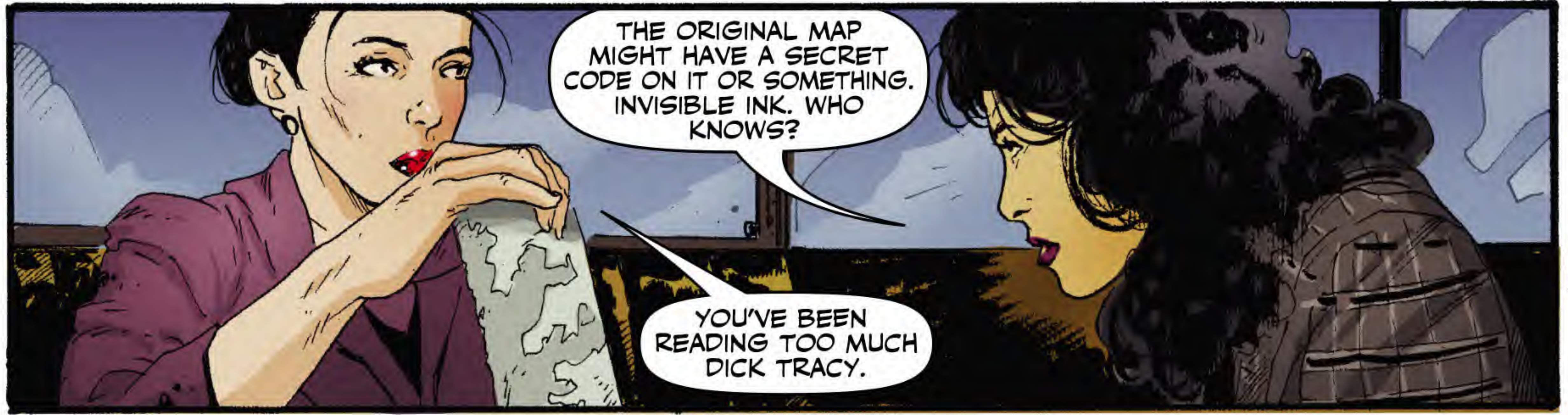
"ARE YOU SURE THAT'S ACCURATE?"



I ONLY SAW THE MAP FOR A FEW SECONDS, BUT I HAVE A *GOOD* MEMORY.

A UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR TOLD ME THE MAP WAS *USELESS* BECAUSE NOTHING WAS MARKED.

AND YET AKASH WAS WILLING TO KILL FOR IT.



THE ORIGINAL MAP MIGHT HAVE A SECRET CODE ON IT OR SOMETHING. INVISIBLE INK. WHO KNOWS?

YOU'VE BEEN READING TOO MUCH DICK TRACY.



YOU LADIES PLAN ON DOING SOME TROUT FISHING?

WHAT FISHING?

TROUT WHAT?



SURE. THAT'S MOHAWK FALLS STATE PARK, AIN'T IT? EXCEPT YOUR MAP DOESN'T SHOW ANY OF THE CAMPS OR INDIAN TRAILS.



INDIAN TRAILS?



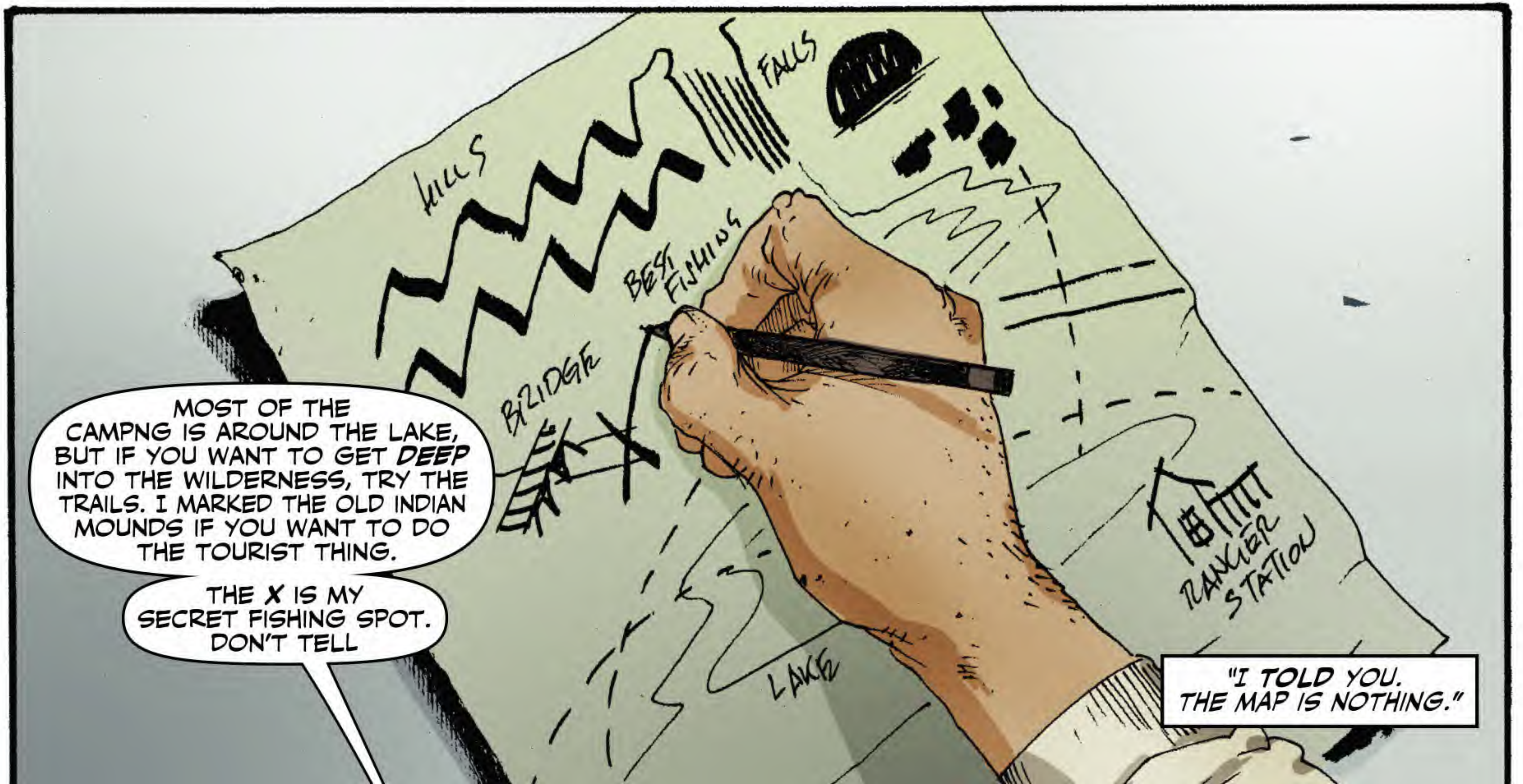
DARLING MAN! HAVE A SEAT.

GIVE HIM YOUR PENCIL.

WELL... ANYTHING FOR A CUSTOMER, EH?



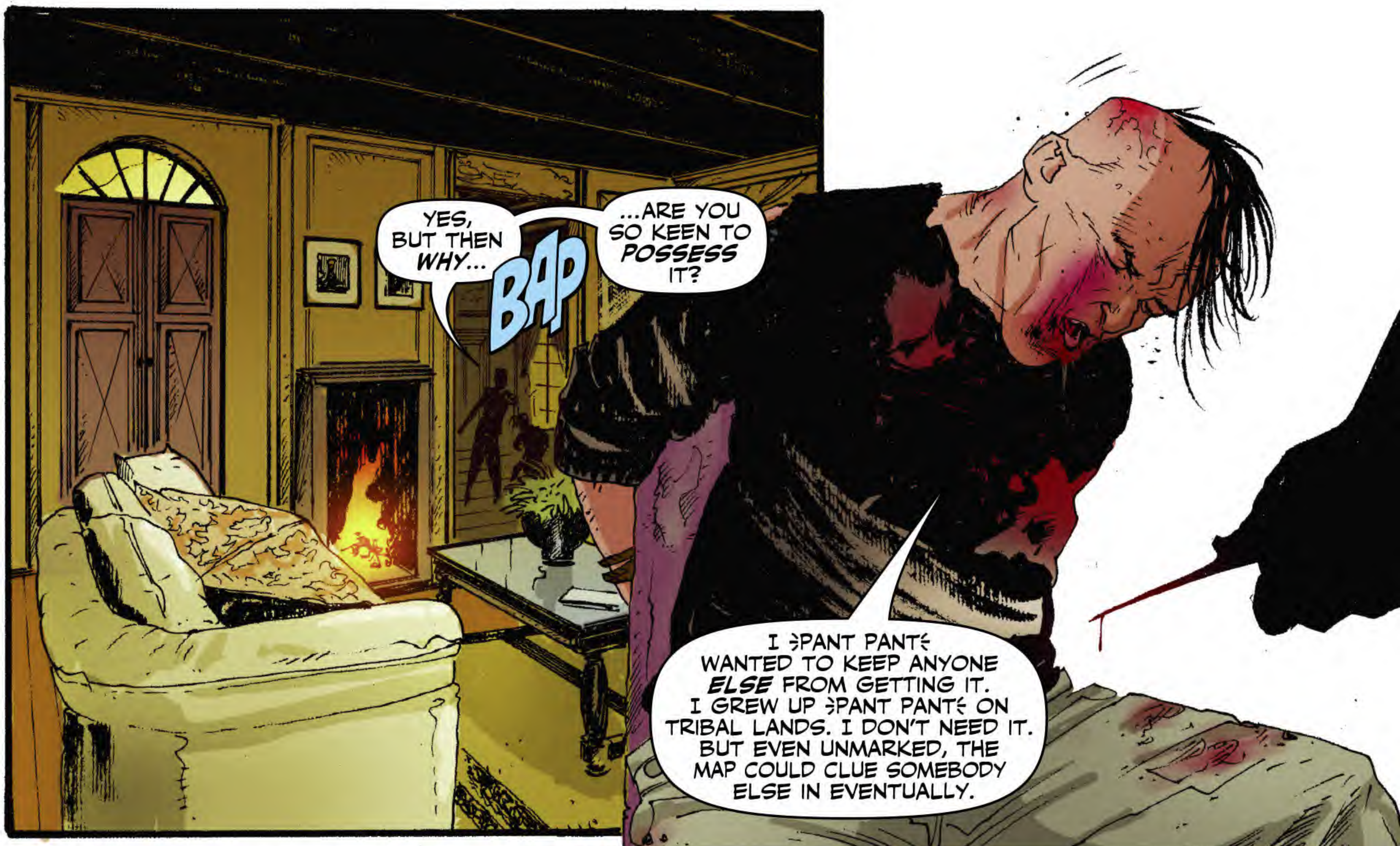
I BEEN HUNTING AND FISHING THAT AREA FOR THIRTY YEARS. I KNOW EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY.



MOST OF THE CAMPING IS AROUND THE LAKE, BUT IF YOU WANT TO GET DEEP INTO THE WILDERNESS, TRY THE TRAILS. I MARKED THE OLD INDIAN MOUNDS IF YOU WANT TO DO THE TOURIST THING.

THE X IS MY SECRET FISHING SPOT. DON'T TELL

"I TOLD YOU. THE MAP IS NOTHING."

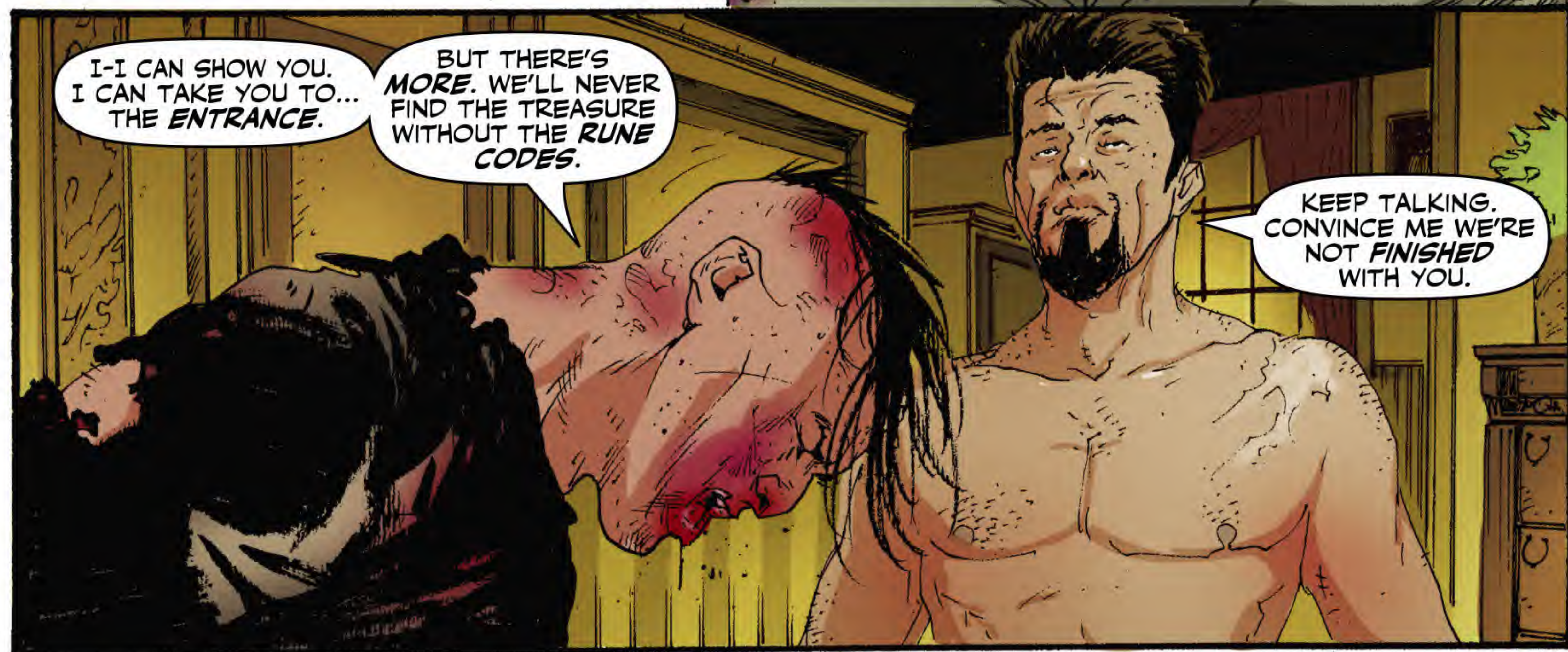


YES,
BUT THEN
WHY...

BAP

...ARE YOU
SO KEEN TO
POSSESS
IT?

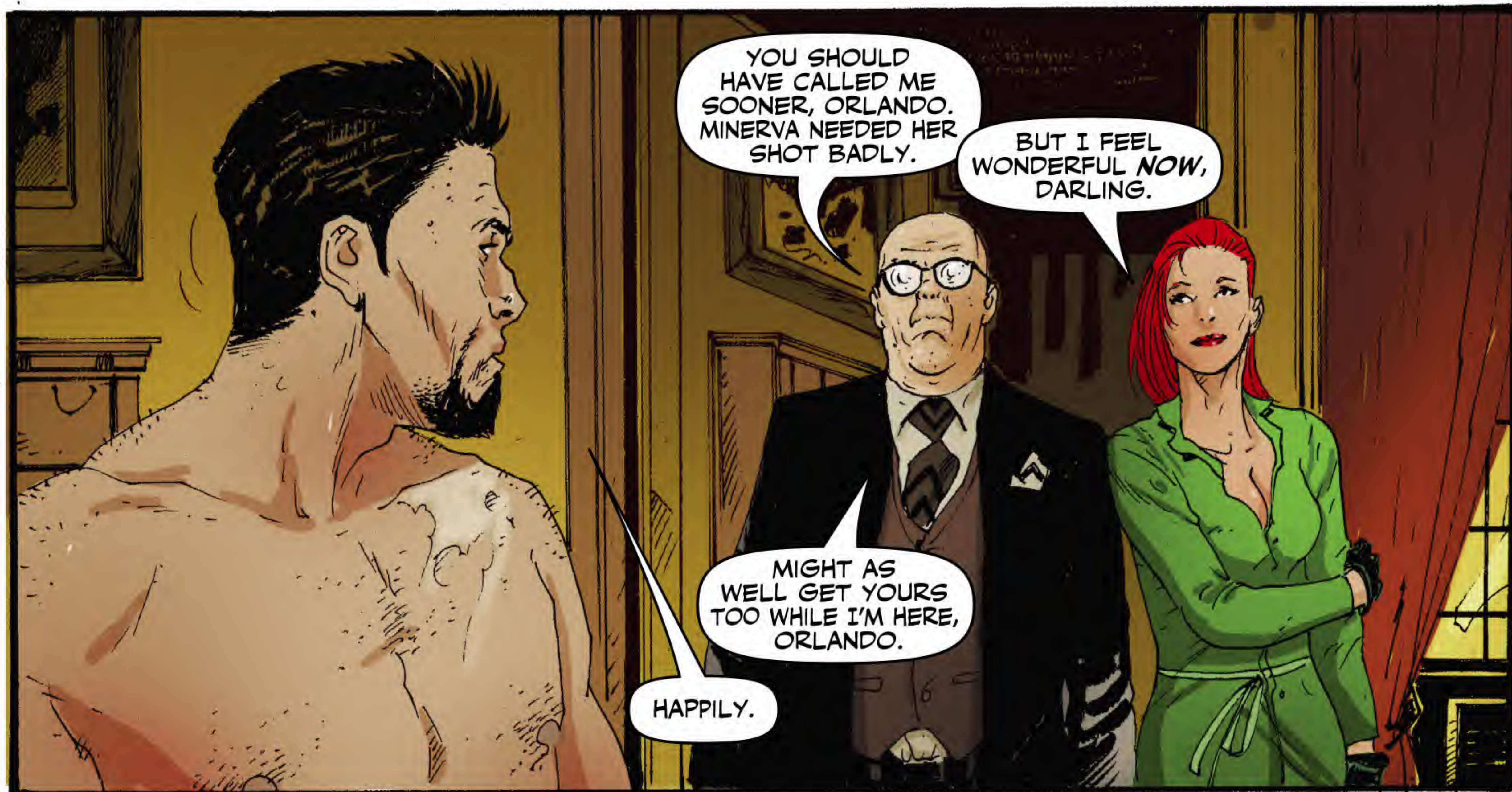
I **ΞPANT PANTΞ**
WANTED TO KEEP ANYONE
ELSE FROM GETTING IT.
I GREW UP **ΞPANT PANTΞ** ON
TRIBAL LANDS. I DON'T NEED IT.
BUT EVEN UNMARKED, THE
MAP COULD CLUE SOMEBODY
ELSE IN EVENTUALLY.



I-I CAN SHOW YOU.
I CAN TAKE YOU TO...
THE **ENTRANCE**.

BUT THERE'S
MORE. WE'LL NEVER
FIND THE TREASURE
WITHOUT THE **RUNE**
CODES.

KEEP TALKING.
CONVINCE ME WE'RE
NOT **FINISHED**
WITH YOU.



YOU SHOULD
HAVE CALLED ME
SOONER, ORLANDO.
MINERVA NEEDED HER
SHOT BADLY.

BUT I FEEL
WONDERFUL **NOW**,
DARLING.

MIGHT AS
WELL GET YOURS
TOO WHILE I'M HERE,
ORLANDO.

HAPPILY.



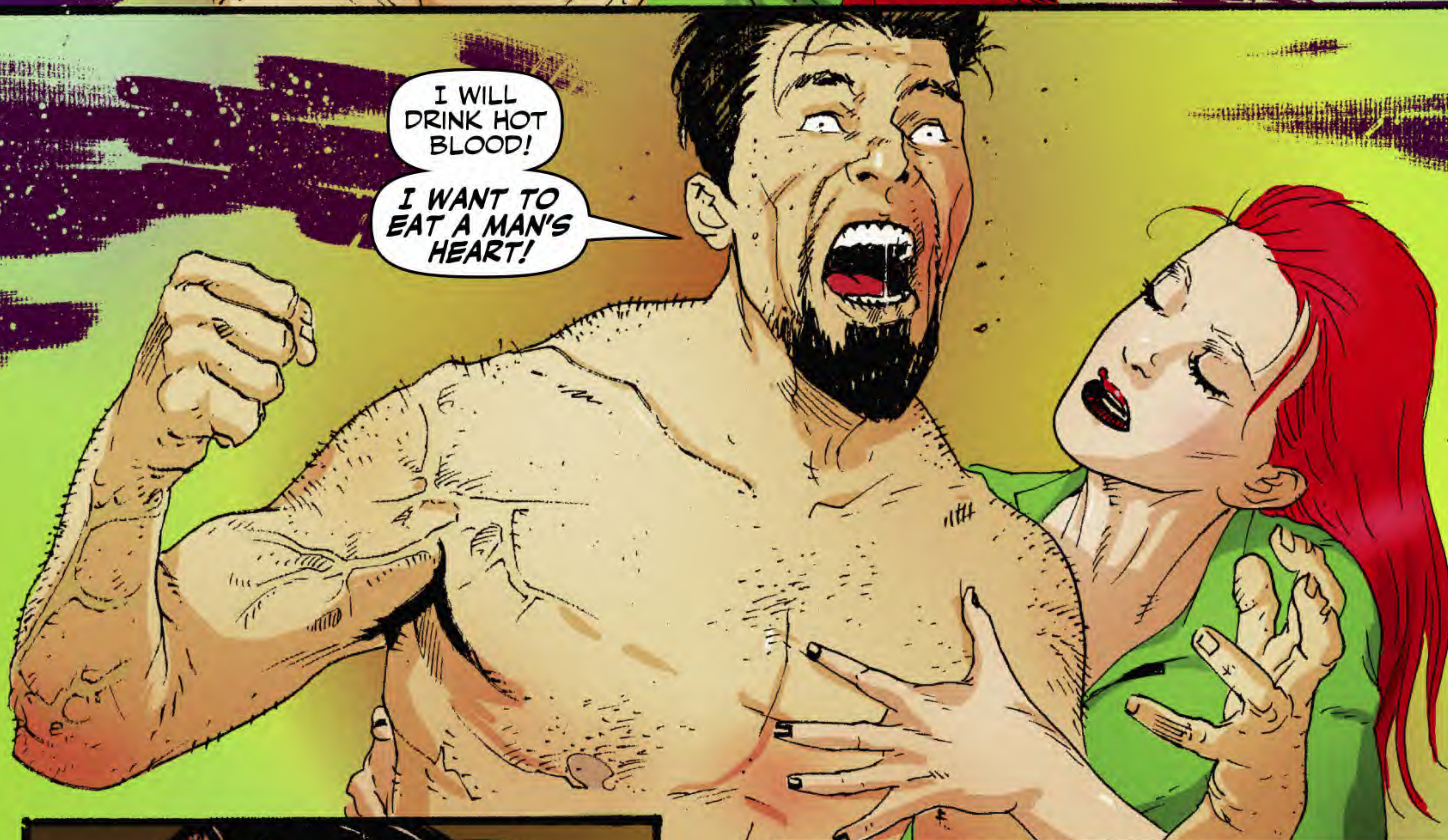
MY OWN **SPECIAL ELIXIR-NUTRIENTS**, EXTRACT OF COCA LEAVES, AND A VERY UNIQUE BLEND OF STEROIDS.

HSSSSSSSS

YES, I **FEEL** IT. THE **STRENGTH**. THE **POWER** FLOWING THROUGH ME.



YOU ARE YOUNG AND STRONG, THE **PERFECT** SPECIMENS. I WILL TRANSFORM YOU INTO A NEW ADAM AND EVE, CREATED IN THE IMAGE I HAVE ENVISIONED.



I WILL DRINK HOT BLOOD!

I WANT TO EAT A MAN'S HEART!



YOU!

W-WAIT... D-DON'T DO ANYTHING **CRAZY!**



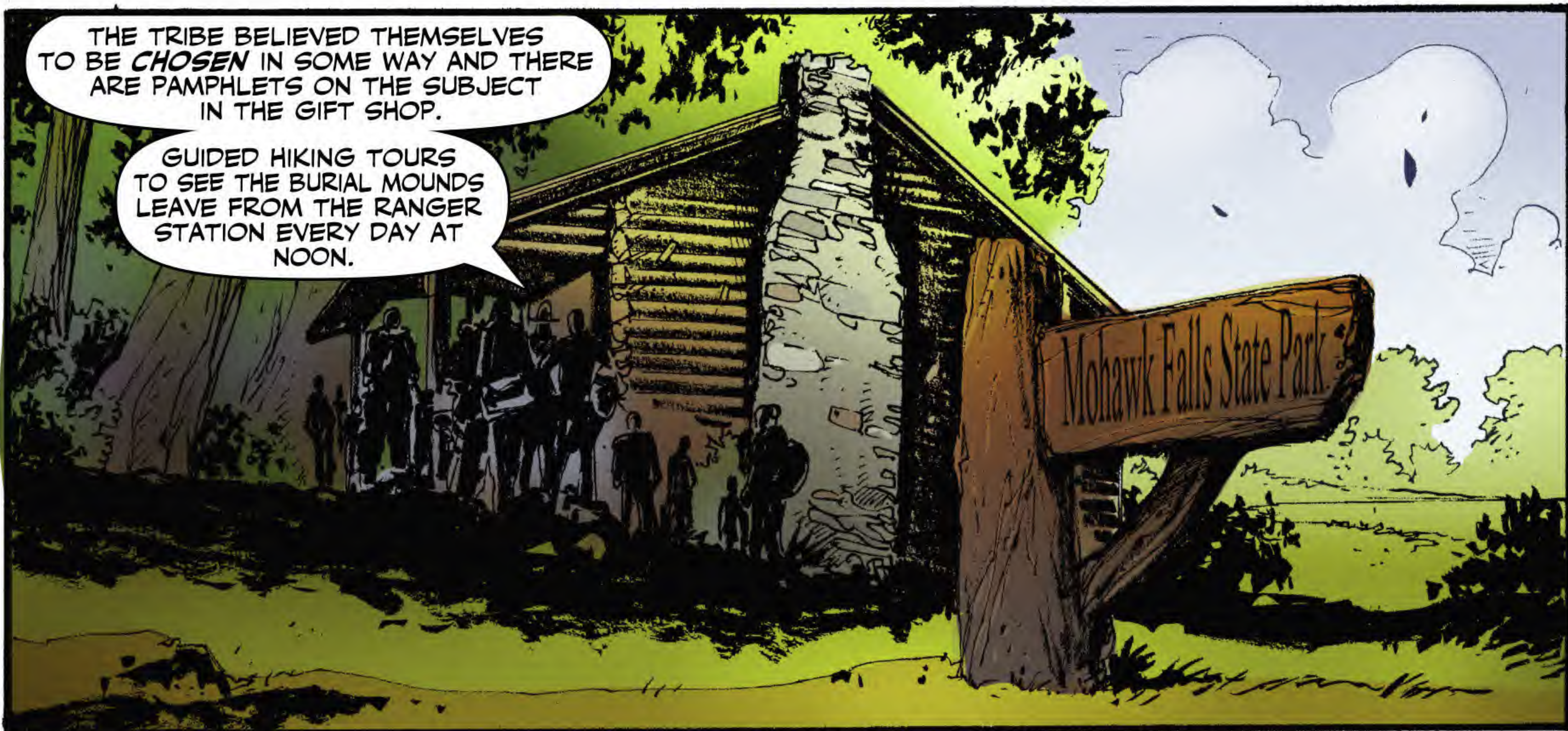
I BELIEVE WE WERE IN THE MIDDLE OF A QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION.

AND FOR YOUR SAKE, AKASH, I HOPE YOUR ANSWERS ARE VERY, VERY GOOD.

"THIS PARTICULAR TRIBE OF MOHAWK BROKE OFF FROM THE REST TO SETTLE HERE IN RHODE ISLAND."

THE TRIBE BELIEVED THEMSELVES TO BE **CHOSEN** IN SOME WAY AND THERE ARE PAMPHLETS ON THE SUBJECT IN THE GIFT SHOP.

GUIDED HIKING TOURS TO SEE THE BURIAL MOUNDS LEAVE FROM THE RANGER STATION EVERY DAY AT NOON.



HIKING?
GRACIAS, NO.
I WONDER IF I CAN
CALL A TAXI.



YOU CALLED
FOR A TAXI,
MADAM?

OH, GOOD.
I'LL ADD **SORE ASS**
TO THE LIST OF TODAY'S
ACCOMPLISHMENTS.



I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'D CARE TO GIVE
ME A COPY OF THOSE MOON STONE RUNES...
IN CASE YOU FALL DOWN A WATERFALL
OR SOMETHING.

GOD
FORBID.

SOMEHOW I
FEEL SAFER IF
I'M **NEEDED**.



I **TOLD** YOU.
I'M JUST IN THIS FOR
THE **ADVENTURE**.

MANY A PARTNERSHIP
HAS GONE AWRY BECAUSE
ONE PARTY DECIDED **ALL** OF
THE PAYOFF SOUNDED
BETTER THAN **HALF**.

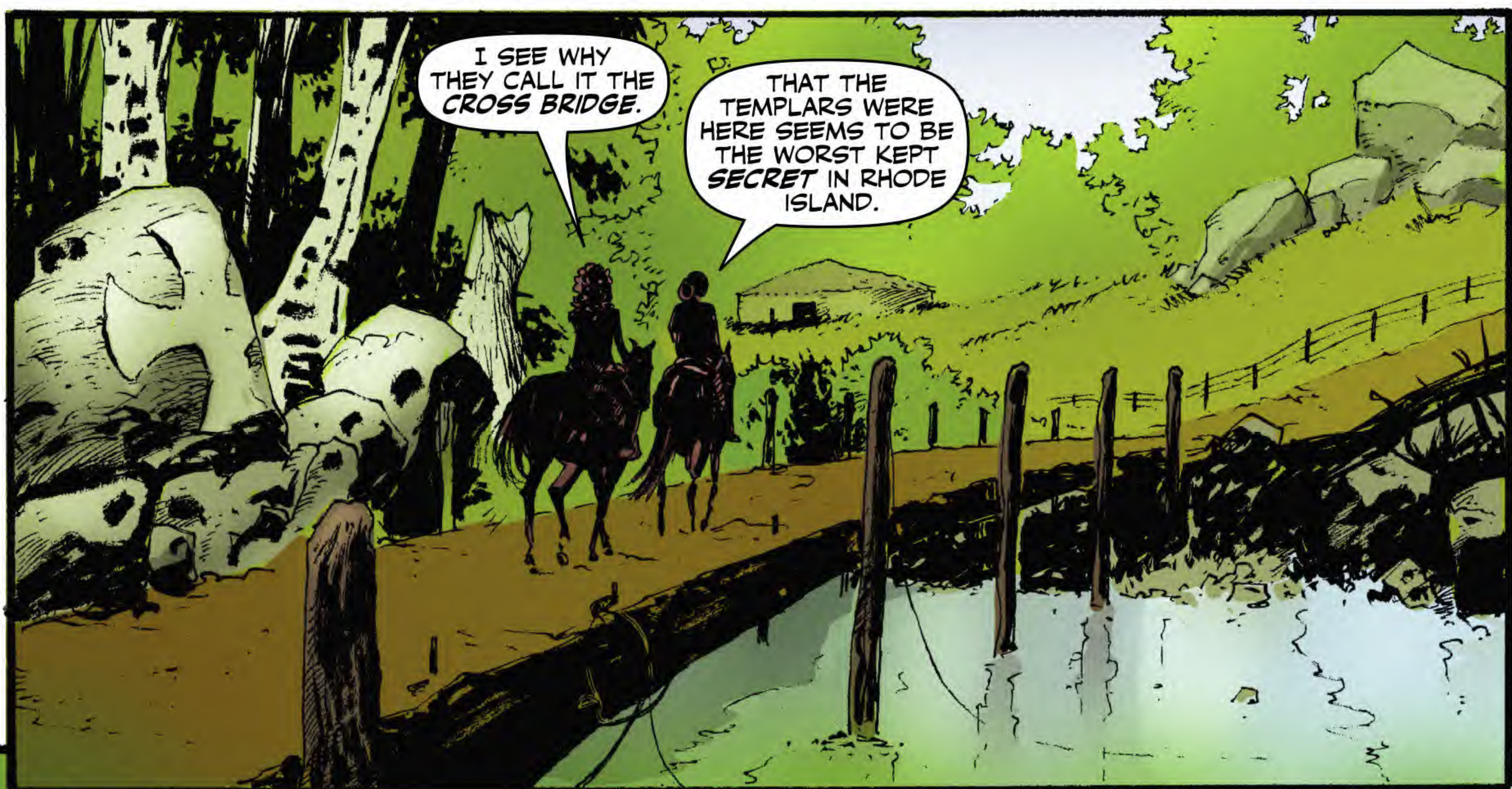
SO
CYNICAL.





AND SOME SAY THE MOUNDS HOLD SOME ANCIENT SECRET, BUT SO FAR ARCHAEOLOGISTS HAVE FOUND NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THIS.

TOO CROWDED HERE. LET'S GO ON TO THE BRIDGE.



I SEE WHY THEY CALL IT THE CROSS BRIDGE.

THAT THE TEMPLARS WERE HERE SEEMS TO BE THE WORST KEPT SECRET IN RHODE ISLAND.



BETTER THAN A SECRET. A **LEGEND**. SMART PEOPLE CAN DISMISS IT AS FOLKLORE, OR LOCALS CAN PLAY IT UP FOR THE TOURISTS.

I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED TO HEAR A PARK RANGER HAD CARVED THAT CROSS.



THIS WAY TO THE CAVE.

WHERE WE'LL PROBABLY FIND A GIFT SHOP AND A SNACK BAR.




I DON'T THINK SO. THE FOLIAGE IS MORE OVERGROWN ON THIS PATH. IT'S NOT USED SO MUCH. HOWEVER...

THESE TRACKS ARE FRESH.

HMMM. MAYBE IT'S TIME WE GOT INTO CHARACTER.

"BROTHER GUSTAV!"



YOU DIDN'T THINK
I'D MISS THE *TREASURE
HUNT*, DID YOU. MY MOST
EXCELLENT LAWYER HAS
ME OUT ON BAIL, AND
HERE I AM.

TOGETHER WE'RE
UNSTOPPABLE.

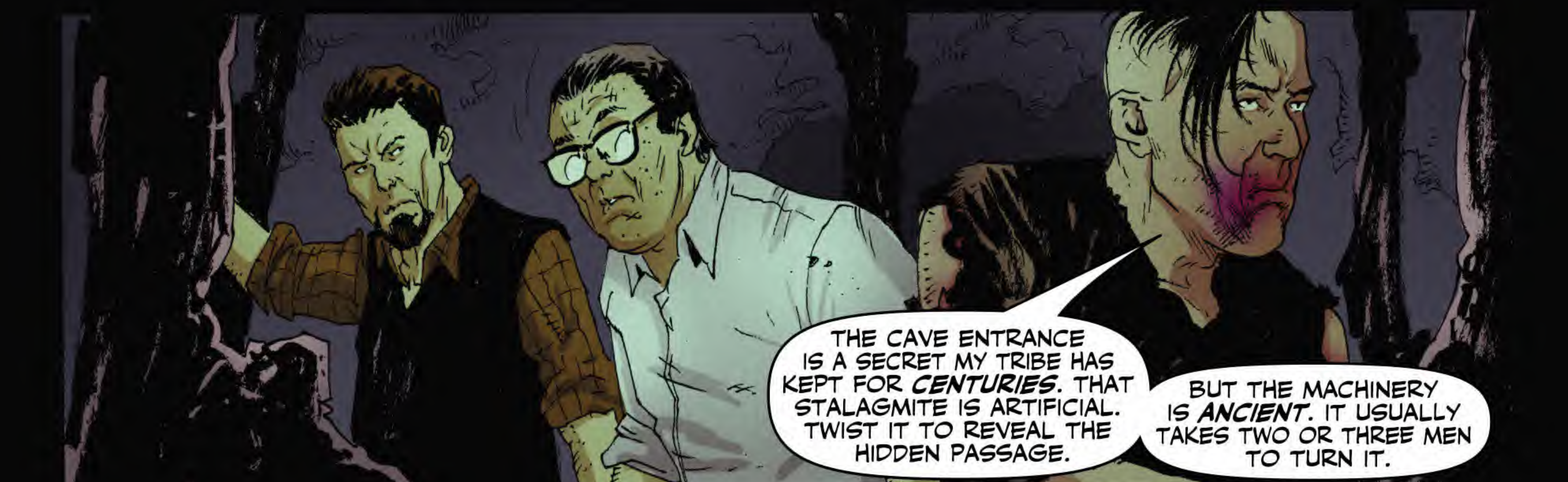


I SEE
YOU'VE TAMED OUR
LITTLE INDIAN.

JUST KEEP THAT
ANIMAL ORLANDO AWAY
FROM *ME*, AND I'LL SHOW
YOU THE WAY.



I WANT TWO
MEN TO GUARD
THE ENTRANCE. THE
REST OF YOU
FOLLOW ME.



THE CAVE ENTRANCE
IS A SECRET MY TRIBE HAS
KEPT FOR *CENTURIES*. THAT
STALAGMITE IS ARTIFICIAL.
TWIST IT TO REVEAL THE
HIDDEN PASSAGE.

BUT THE MACHINERY
IS *ANCIENT*. IT USUALLY
TAKES TWO OR THREE MEN
TO TURN IT.



NONSENSE.



NNNGHH<

JUST NEED...
TO PUT...BACK
IN TO IT.



YES, SHOW
THEM, DARLING.
SHOW THEM WHAT
A MAN CAN DO.



SSSCRRRIITCH



SKUURRTCH



AMAZING.

I'VE ONLY BEEN AS FAR AS THIS FIRST TUNNEL.



WELL, WE'D BETTER GET FARTHER TODAY, OR THIS TUNNEL WILL BE YOUR *TOMB*.

I TOLD YOU, I *REMEMBER* THE FIRST SEQUENCE. IT *SHOULD* WORK.



I JUST HAVE TO PUT THEM IN THE RIGHT ORDER.



THAT SHOULD DO IT.

SKUUUUUUUUSSHH



OH MY.





MMMMM.
GOOD CIGAR FOR
A THUG.



HERE.
THESE ARE LOADS
OF FUN.

I LOVE
PRESENTS.



SMELL
THAT? TORCHES.
FRESH.



YOU
KNOW WHAT
I THINK?

WHAT?





ISSUE 4







I TOLD YOU.
I ONLY REMEMBERED
THE COMBINATION FOR
THE FIRST DOOR. I'M
GUESSING HERE.

TRY ANOTHER
COMBINATION.

I CAN'T.
THE DIALS ARE
LOCKED
NOW.



WAIT
A MINUTE.
I THINK I
SEE...



"...YES, A LEVER.
YOU THINK IT RETRACTS
THE BLADES?"



WELL, *SOMEBODY* HAS
TO DODGE THE BLADES
AND GET ACROSS TO
FIND OUT.

DON'T
LOOK AT *ME*,
BOSS.



LET *ME* TRY,
DARLING. THREE
YEARS OF BALLET.
PLUS YOU KNOW
HOW *FLEXIBLE*
I AM.

MINERVA, PLEASE.
WHAT GOOD ARE YOU
TO ME IF ALL YOUR
GOOD BITS GET SLICED
AWAY?



THIS IS WORKING OUT.
IF WE WAIT LONG ENOUGH
THEY MIGHT ALL KILL
THEMSELVES AND THEN WE
CAN WALTZ RIGHT IN.

I'M NOT THAT
PATIENT. LET'S JUST
SHOOT-



KA-KLIK



EASY LADIES. NO SUDDEN MOVES.

MIERDA.



WE MEET AGAIN. I *DO* LIKE THE COSTUMES.

I LIKE IT EVEN MORE WHEN A SOLUTION TO A TRICKY PROBLEM PRESENTS ITSELF.



IS HE LOOKING AT ME OR YOU?

LET'S SAY YOU.

DAMN.



MAYBE IT'S JUST THE COSTUME, BUT YOU LOOK LIKE A WOMAN WHO COULD DODGE A FEW SWINGING BLADES. WOULDN'T BE A CHALLENGE FOR YOU AT ALL, WOULD IT?



LET'S SEE HOW FAST AND AGILE YOU REALLY ARE.







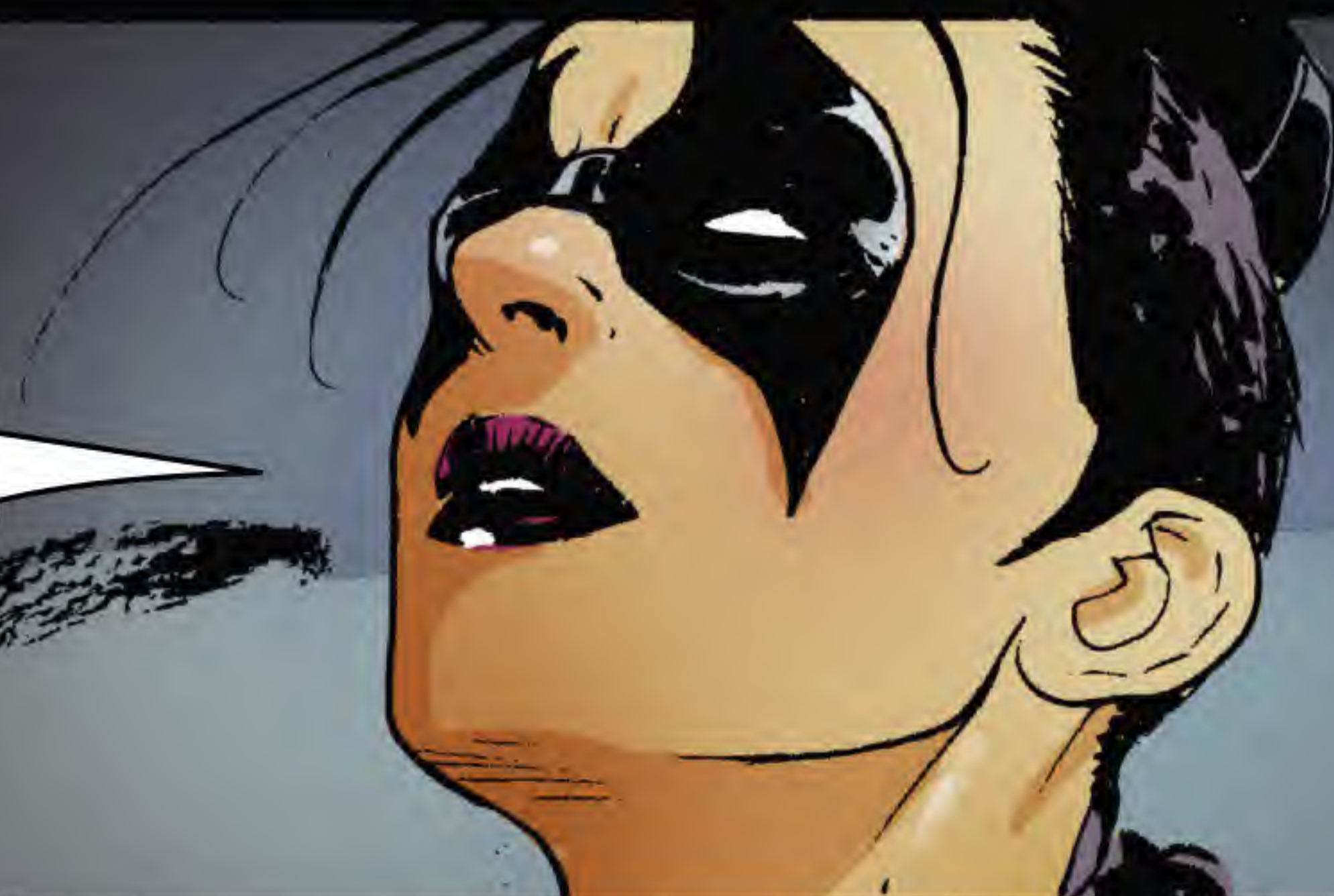






I SEE I HAVE
YOUR ATTENTION.
GOOD.

AND SINCE IT
SEEMS MY PARTNER
MISS FURY HAS TURNED
OUT TO BE *UNA PUTA*
GRANDE I AM NOW OPEN
TO *ALTERNATIVE*
ARRANGEMENTS.



IF YOU'RE
PROPOSING WE
COOPERATE...
THEN VERY WELL.
I AGREE.

BUT CAN
WE *TRUST* EACH
OTHER?



PROBABLY
NOT.

BUT I'LL DROP
MY GUN OVER THE SIDE
IF YOU DO. MAYBE WE'LL
FEEL SAFER THEN.

ONE...
TWO...





THREE.



WE STILL
NEED TO GET
ACROSS THE
BRIDGE.

LET ME
TRY.

MINERVA!

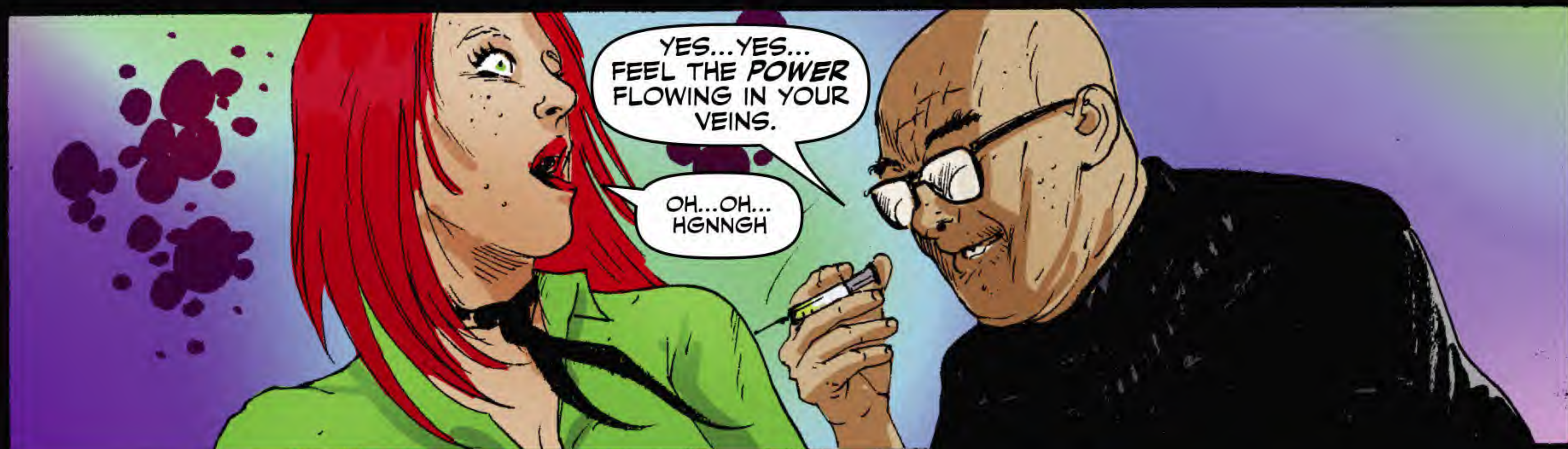


I CAN
DO IT.

OF COURSE
YOU CAN. BECAUSE I
WILL *HELP* YOU.



YOU KNOW HOW
DR. RAVEL CAN HELP
YOU. YOU KNOW I WILL
ALWAYS BE HERE
FOR YOU.



YES...YES...
FEEL THE *POWER*
FLOWING IN YOUR
VEINS.

OH...OH...
HNNNGH



REMEMBER HOW
MISS FURY DID IT.
YOU CAN DO IT TOO,
DARLING.





KLINK-KLINK-KLINK-KLINK-KLINK

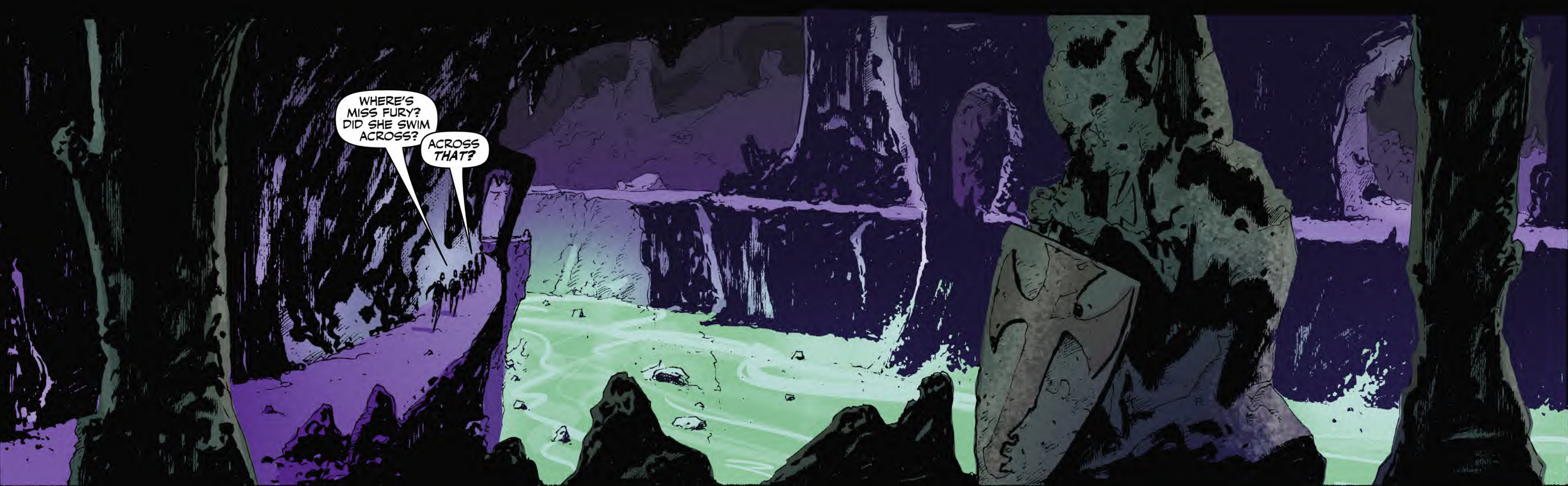
WE'RE
COMING,
DARLING!

WELL
DONE. YOU WERE
MAGNIFICENT.

THE FURY
WOMAN MADE IT
LOOK SO EASY.

NEVER MIND.
YOU GOT US ACROSS.
THAT'S ALL THAT
MATTERS.

I WOULDN'T
SAY IT'S **ALL** THAT
MATTERS. WE MAY HAVE
GOTTEN OVER THE
CHASM...



WHERE'S
MISS FURY?
DID SHE SWIM
ACROSS?
ACROSS
THAT?



IF SHE
TRIED, THEN SHE
DROWNED.
BUT WE DON'T
NEED TO WORRY ABOUT
THAT. WE'VE GOT THE
CODES.



CLICK



CLICK CLICK CLICK CLICK CLICK

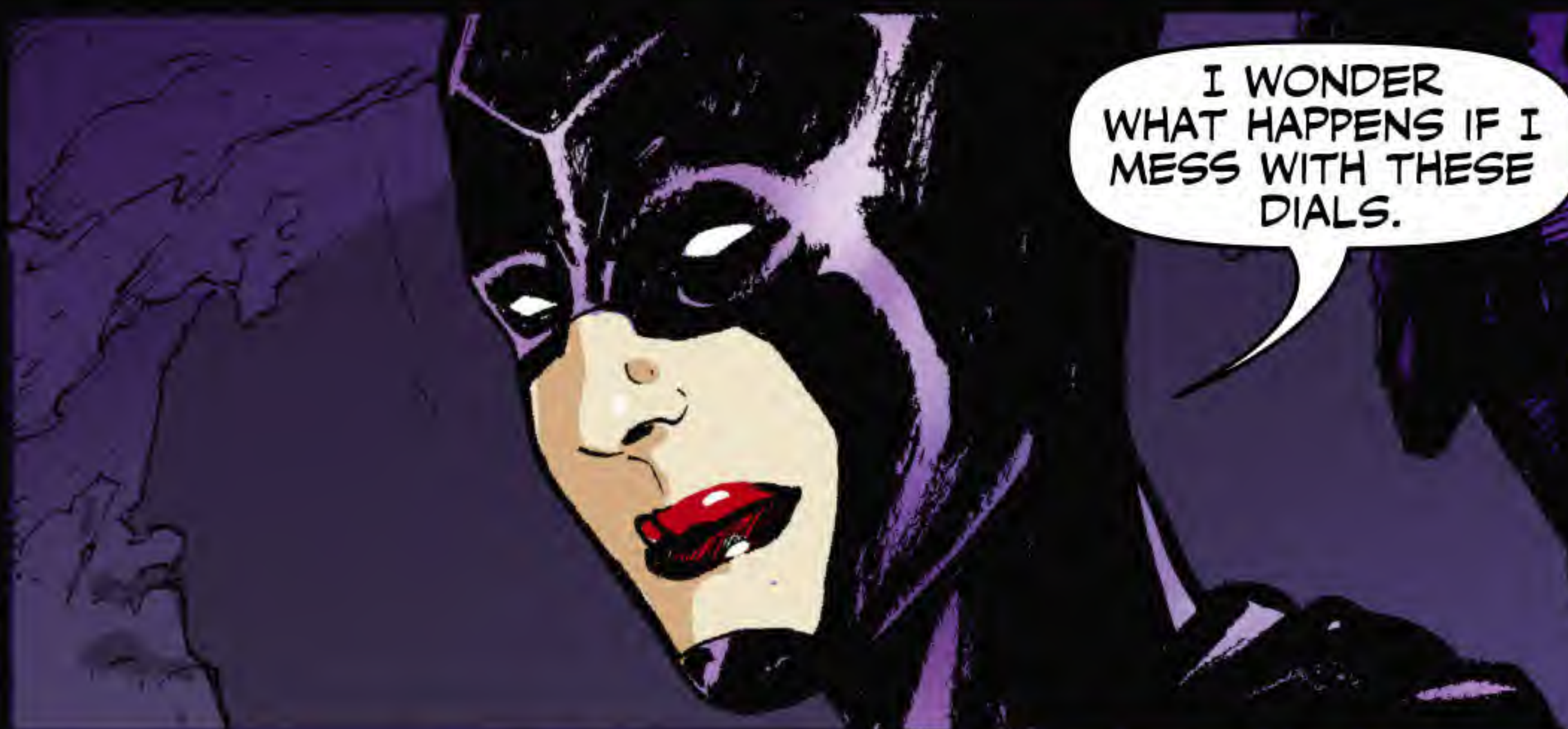


THIS IS BETTER
THAN DODGING BLADES.
FOR THE FIRST TIME I'M
GLAD I DIDN'T KILL YOU,
SPARROW.



WELL, DON'T YOU ALL MAKE A PRETTY PARADE.

YOU!



I WONDER WHAT HAPPENS IF I MESS WITH THESE DIALS.



MAYBE JUST ONE.

CHIK-CHIK-CHIK-CHIK



LOOK OUT!

THEY'RE GOING BACK DOWN!



JUMP, DR. RAVEL!









SHE'S...
SHE'S GONE.

I KNOW IT
HURTS.



WE WILL FIND YOU
A NEW BRIDE TO BE. ONE
WHO IS STRONG. I WILL
MAKE HER STRONG.
FOR YOU.

AND YOUR
OFFSPRING WILL
BE **GODS**.



IT
WON'T BE THE
SAME.

BROTHER AND
LOVER LOST IS ONE
FELL SWOOP.



TOUCHING.
BUT WE REALLY
DON'T HAVE
TIME TO-

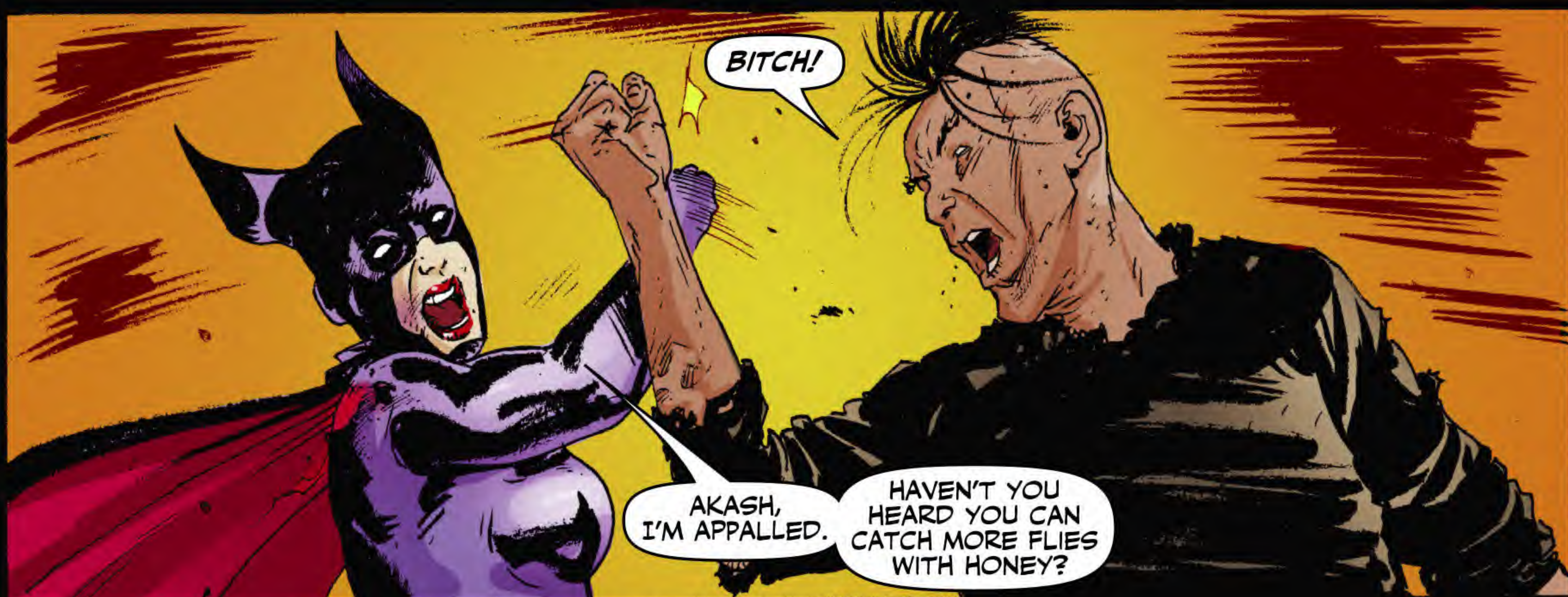




ISSUE 5









HOLD IT!



EASY NOW.
YOU'VE *SHOT* ME
AND TRIED TO *DROWN*
ME. LET'S TRY
TALKING.

SHUT UP!



THE INDIAN
MIGHT BE USEFUL
IN HELPING ME
FIND MY WAY OUT
OF HERE.



YOU ON
THE OTHER
HAND...



"SO WHAT'S IT GOING
TO BE, ORLANDO?"



DO WE BACK
THIS DOWN A NOTCH
AND GO BACK TO
COOPERATING?

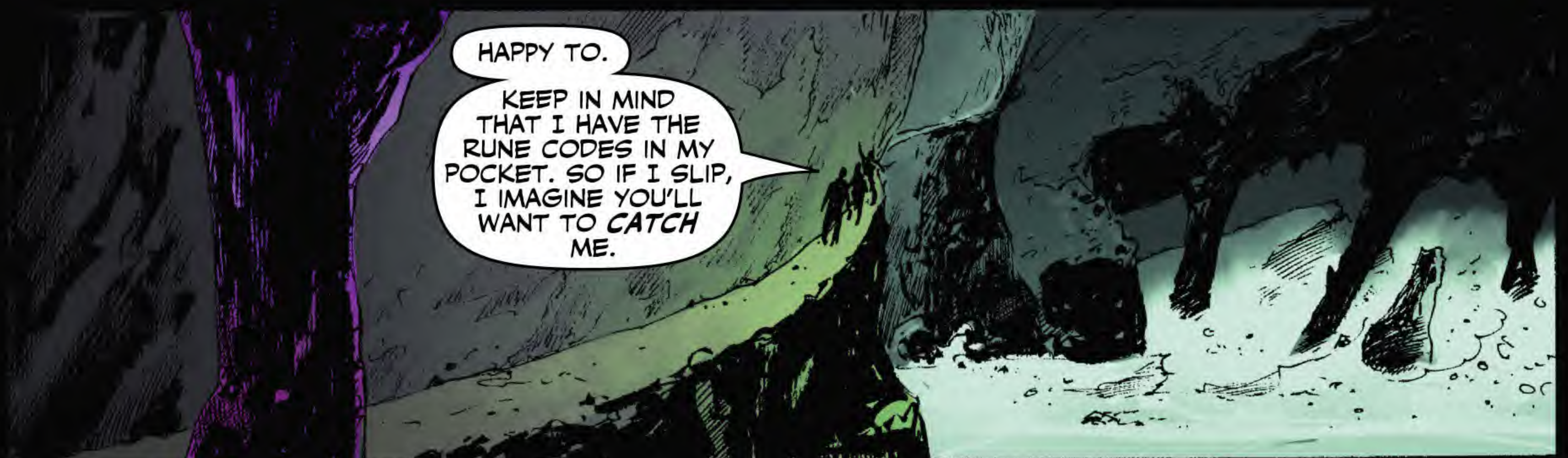
OR SHALL WE
SEE IF YOU CAN
HIT THE HIGH
NOTE?




TEMPERS
ARE HIGH. WE'RE
ALL ON EDGE.
LET'S TAKE A DEEP
BREATH.



VERY WELL.

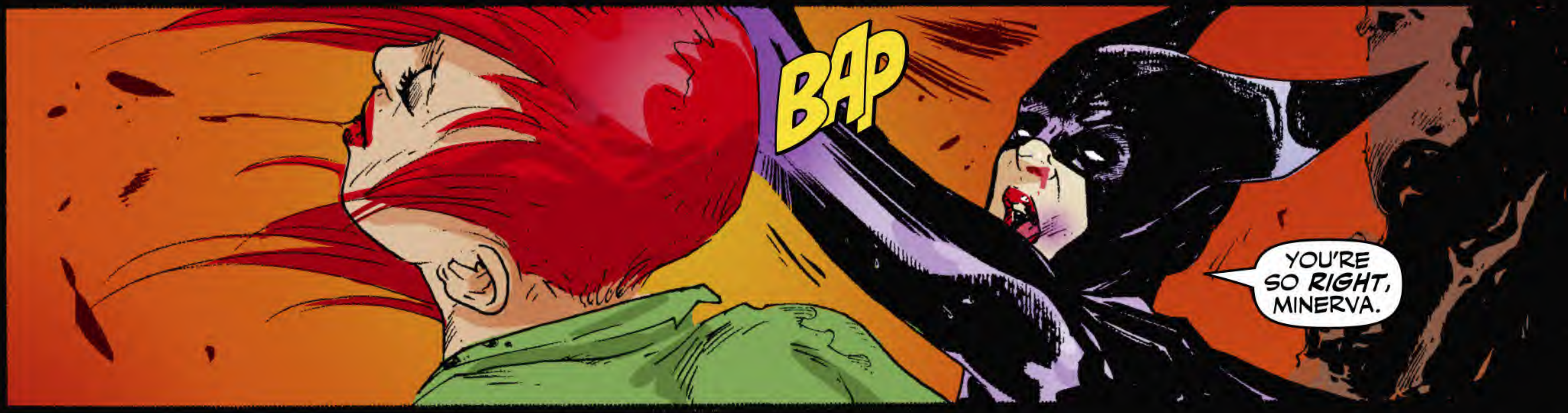
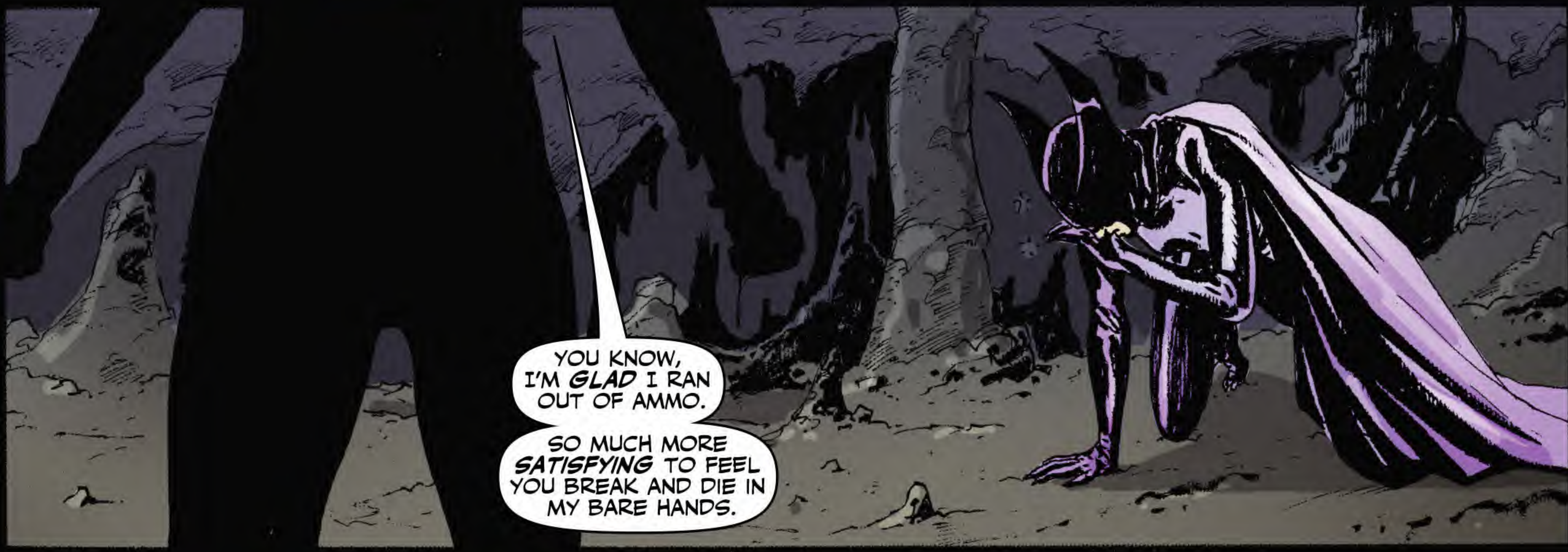




I THINK WHEN
THE TEMPLARS CAME
THEY MUST HAVE BROUGHT
A CRAP LOAD OF HAMMERS
AND CHISELS WITH
THEM.

"I MAY HAVE
ONLY WINGED
YOU BEFORE..."







AAARRGGH!



WHAK



ENOUGH
OF THIS.



»PANT»
»PANT»
»PANT»



WHAT
THE---?!

"UP AND UP,
BUT TO WHERE?"



TO *GOLD*,
MY DEAR DR.
RAVEL.

SURELY WE'RE
COMING TO THE
END OF THIS
LABYRINTH.



YOU MAY BE
RIGHT. THERE'S
ONLY ONE CODE
LEFT.



AND THEN I
EXPECT YOU TO
KEEP YOUR
BARGAIN, ORLANDO.
JUST TRY TO STAB
ME IN THE BACK
AND SEE WHAT
HAPPENS.

ARROGANT
HUSSY.



IF I WANT TO
END YOU, YOU'LL
SEE IT COMING. BE
SURE OF *THAT* IF
NOTHING ELSE.



NEVER
MIND THE
TOUGH TALK,
SENOR.

I DO BELIEVE
WE'VE AT LAST
ARRIVED...



...AT OUR FINAL
DESTINATION.



MAGNIFICENT.



LIKE GODS
WAITING TO USHER
IN A NEW AGE. THE
WORLD THEY COULD HAVE
MADE TOGETHER IF
THEY'D HAD THE
CHANCE.



A WOMAN LIKE YOU,
WITH MY HELP, YOU
COULD TAKE MINERVA'S
PLACE. THE WORLD
WOULD TREMBLE.

PUERCO.



ENOUGH.
BRING
FORTH THE
FINAL RUNE
CODE.

"I WILL SAY THIS,
MINERVA..."



YOU DO
PANT PANT
MAKE IT
FUN.

AND WHAT'S
THE POINT PANT
PANT IN LIFE IF WE
CAN'T PANT PANT
HAVE A GOOD
TIME?



MOCKING
BITCH.



TRY SMIRKING
WHEN YOU'RE
DEAD.



GASP





I'M DIALING IN THE LAST RUNE NOW, BUT WHO KNOWS WHAT FINAL SURPRISE THE TEMPLARS MIGHT SPRING ON US?

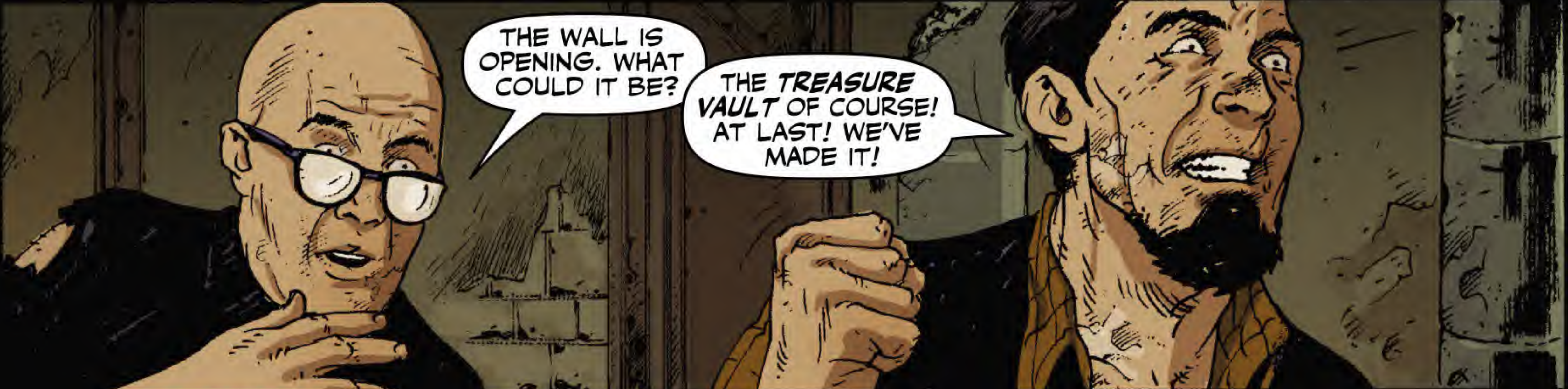
JUST *HURRY*. I GROW WEARY OF THE SUSPENSE.



KLIK



SHHHIK-CHIK-CHIK-CHIK-CHIK



THE WALL IS OPENING. WHAT COULD IT BE?

THE *TREASURE* VAULT OF COURSE! AT LAST! WE'VE MADE IT!



I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND.







WHAK

I DON'T THINK SO.

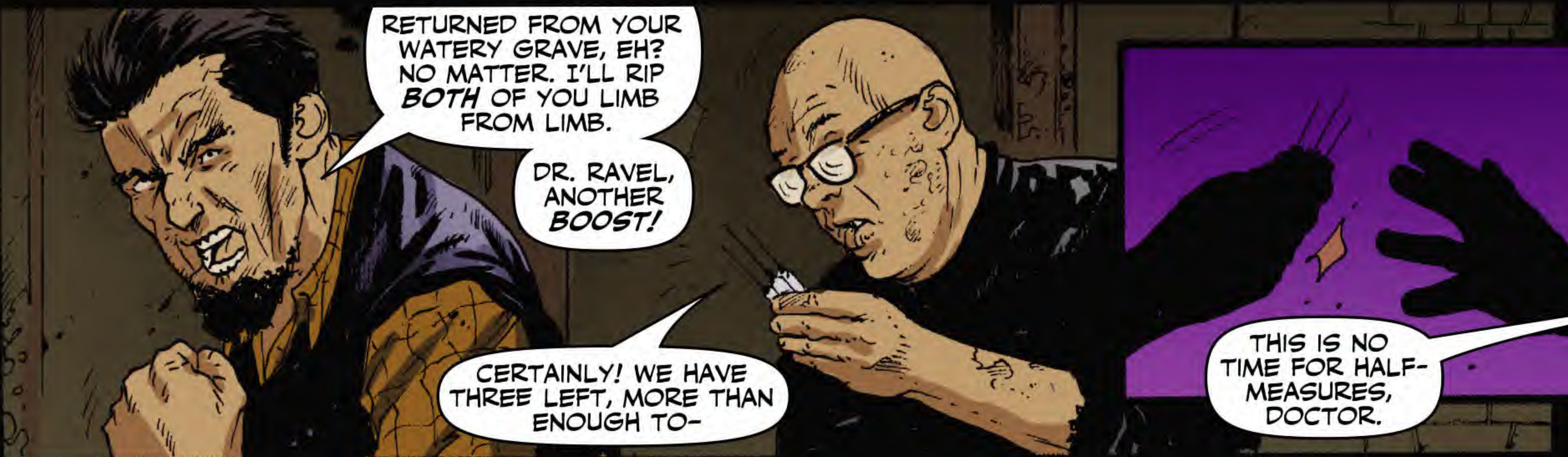


WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

TOOK THE SCENIC ROUTE. WHAT DID I MISS?

NO TREASURE. AND NOW ORLANDO WANTS TO KILL US.

CRAP.



RETURNED FROM YOUR WATERY GRAVE, EH? NO MATTER. I'LL RIP BOTH OF YOU LIMB FROM LIMB.

DR. RAVEL, ANOTHER BOOST!

CERTAINLY! WE HAVE THREE LEFT, MORE THAN ENOUGH TO-

THIS IS NO TIME FOR HALF-MEASURES, DOCTOR.



GAH!



NOT ALL THREE!





EDMUND?

THE
PENALTY FOR
TRESSPASSING IS...
DEATH.



NOOOO!



SHRRRAAK



I DID
NOT SEE THAT
COMING.

QUE
LASTIMA.

SEEMS
WE'VE ARRIVED
JUST IN TIME FOR
THE FINALE.



THANK YOU FOR BRINGING AKASH BACK TO US. HE IS WANTED FOR CRIMES AMONG MY PEOPLE AS WELL AS YOURS.

I AM WANEK, TRIBAL ELDER AND THE DIRECT DESCENDENT OF SIR EDMUND.

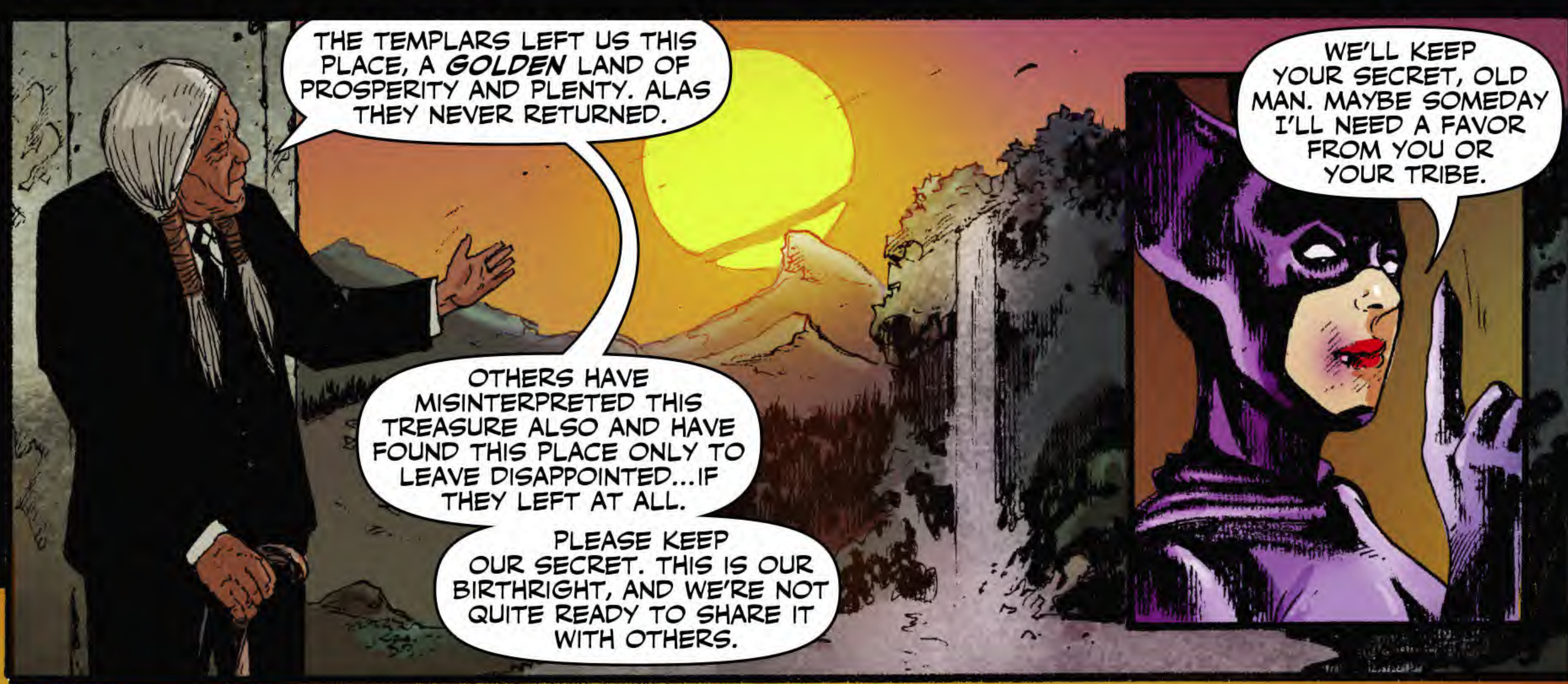


YOU MEAN AKASH ISN'T...?

AKASH IS AN IMPOSTER, STEALING TRIBAL SECRETS FOR HIS OWN GAIN.

PARDON ME FOR BEING BLUNT, BUT THERE'S NO LOST TEMPLAR GOLD, IS THERE?

IN A WAY.



THE TEMPLARS LEFT US THIS PLACE, A **GOLDEN** LAND OF PROSPERITY AND PLENTY. ALAS THEY NEVER RETURNED.

OTHERS HAVE MISINTERPRETED THIS TREASURE ALSO AND HAVE FOUND THIS PLACE ONLY TO LEAVE DISAPPOINTED...IF THEY LEFT AT ALL.

PLEASE KEEP OUR SECRET. THIS IS OUR BIRTHRIGHT, AND WE'RE NOT QUITE READY TO SHARE IT WITH OTHERS.

WE'LL KEEP YOUR SECRET, OLD MAN. MAYBE SOMEDAY I'LL NEED A FAVOR FROM YOU OR YOUR TRIBE.



I ALWAYS SAID I WAS IN THIS FOR THE ADVENTURE, **NOT** THE TREASURE.

WELL... IT'S A NICE VIEW ANYWAY.

END

BONUS MATERIAL



NOIR #1

VICTOR GISCHLER

"The Moon Stone Legacy"



PAGE ONE

Panel 1
Establishing shot of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Late at night.

1 SFX: RINGAringaRINGAringaRINGAringaRINGA

Panel 2
Close on an old time alarm bell ringing. Small panel.

2 SFX: RINGAringaRINGAringaRINGAringaRINGA

Panel 3
CUT TO: Big panel. The dark lobby of the museum but light enough to see what is going on. Three uniformed security guards run past the big skeleton of the dinosaur. They are wielding flashlights. The flashlight beams stab into the darkness.

3 Guard: THIS WAY! GET THE LEAD OUT, YOU BUMS!

Panel 4
CUT TO: A hallway with display mannequins of Mohawk Indians on either side. The guards run up this hall. They have pistols drawn.

4 Guard: COME ON! THE MOHAWK EXHIBIT!



PAGE TWO

Panel 1
The guard, with the other two standing behind him, shines his flashlight on a broken dome of glass on a pedestal. The glass dome is obviously a display for something, but it's been broken into and whatever was under the dome is gone.

1 Guard: THE MOON STONE!

2 Guard: OKAY, SPREAD OUT. WHOEVER TOOK IT
CAN'T HAVE GOTTEN TOO FAR SO –

Panel 2

A length of bull whip lashes out of the darkness to snap a pistol out of one of the guard's hands. (We do NOT see who is wielding the whip on this page ... but we can guess.)

3 SFX: *WUP-SNAP*

4 Guard: HEY!

Panel 3

The bull whip lashes out again at a different guard and his pistol goes flying to

5 SFX: *SNAP*

6 Different Guard: *>GAH!<*

Panel 4

The whip lashes out again and the flashlight goes flying from the hand of the other guard, the beam of light flashing around wildly as the flashlight spins in the air.

7 SFX: *WIP-SNAP*

Panel 5

Close on the flashlight hitting the floor, the glass part breaking as the flashlight winks out.

8 SFX: *KISH*

Panel 6

CUT TO: A kitchen. Day. Close on the kitchen floor as a juice glass hits the tile and shatters. We also see an attractive pair of women's feet. These are Margo's feet, but we don't know that yet. This panel should somehow mirror or match the one above to help us transition to the next scene in Cranston's kitchen.

9 SFX: *KISH*

PAGE THREE

Panel 1

The kitchen of Cranston's swanky penthouse apartment. Cranston is standing in the doorway of the kitchen, looking in at us. He is wearing an expensive robe over silk pajamas, cinched at the waste. He has one hand behind his back ... try to make this look natural although, yes, he's got a gun back there.

1 Cranston: I HOPE THAT WASN'T THE SOUND OF ONE
OF MY GOOD CRYSTAL GLASSES
BREAKING ON THE TILE –

2 Cranston: OH.

3 Cranston: WE HAVE COMPANY.

Panel 2

Reverse angle. **BIG** panel to show off the ladies. The Black Sparrow is sitting on the kitchen counter next to the sink. Over the sink is a window, thin curtains blowing in to show the window is open. (We also want to suggest that maybe the window is how Sparrow got inside.) Margo stands in front of Sparrow. She is wearing a sexy period nightgown. Maybe:

http://img1.etsystatic.com/009/0/6216065/il_fullxfull.446570593_2lgh.jpg

Margo's chin is up, an expression on her face like she refuses to be rattled by this situation ... and here is the situation: Sparrow is sitting behind her, her legs wrapped around Margo. One of Sparrow's hands gently grabs Margo by the shoulder/neck, sort of half caress half domination hold. Sparrow's other hand holds her trademark Mauser pistol pointed at Margo's face. Pistol:

<http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/guerre/photos/2800/19920246-001.jpg>

On the counter on the other side of the sink (space permitting) maybe we see a state of the art 1939 kitchen appliance of some sort. A blender or mixer or something.

4 Black Sparrow: GOOD MORNING, MR. CRANSTON.

5 Black Sparrow: SORRY IF I'M CATCHING YOU OFF GUARD, BUT I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D MIND IF AN OLD FRIEND POPPED IN FOR BREAKFAST.

Panel 3

Closer head-n-shoulders two-shot of Margo and Sparrow. They are almost cheek to cheek. Sparrow's expression is sultry but also somewhat like she might be a little crazy. Sexy-crazy. Margo's eyes slide to the side to consider Sparrow. She has a snooty look on her face like Sparrow is some kind of trash from another social class that Margo is being forced to socialize with.

6 Margo: YOU KNOW EACH OTHER?

7 Margo: HOW DELIGHTFUL.

PAGE FOUR

Panel 1

Behind Cranston now. We can see he's holding one of Shadow's .45 automatics behind his back. Looking past Cranston, we glimpse Sparrow and Margo.

1 Cranston: I ADMIT I AM A LITTLE SURPRISED TO SEE YOU.

2 Cranston: THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU, YOU WERE ... WELL ... PLUMMETING.

Panel 2

On Margo and Sparrow. Slightly wider than the previous two-shot. The gun wavers from Margo's face as the Sparrow offers us a slight shrug. Margo looks like she's just starting to pull away from Sparrow.

3 Black Sparrow: YOU PUSH ME OFF A TOWER. I TOSS YOU FROM AN AIRPLANE.

4 Black Sparrow: HAZARDS OF OUR PROFESSION, YES?

5 Margo: SEEMS I'M NOT STRICTLY NEEDED FOR THIS CONVERSATION SO MAYBE I'LL JUST TODDLE OFF AND –

Panel 3

Sparrow pulls her back, presses her nose against the side of Margo's face so she can speak directly into Margo's ear. Sparrow has a slightly wild look in her eyes – but don't go over the top. Margo has a look on her face like she's just smelled a fart.

6 Black Sparrow: BUT IT WOULDN'T BE A PARTY WITHOUT YOU, BRIGHT EYES.

Panel 4

Cranston casually enters the kitchen, close enough to include all three of them in the shot.

7 Cranston: I'VE OFTEN EXPRESSED THE SAME SENTIMENT. SHE DOES TEND TO LIGHT UP A ROOM.

8 Cranston: BUT YOU'RE HERE TO SEE ME. I SUGGEST WE RETIRE TO NEUTRAL GROUND WHERE WE CAN DISCUSS WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND IN A CIVILIZED FASHION.

9 Margo: I VOTE FOR THAT.

Panel 5

Tight on Sparrow's face. A tight smile totally devoid of humor. Eyes narrow.

10 Black Sparrow: VERY WELL.

11 Black Sparrow: NAME THE TIME AND PLACE.

12 Black Sparrow/CAP: "IT WAS WHILE CLINGING TO A GARGOYLE IN THE FOG THAT I BEGAN TO PLAN MY BRUTAL, VIOLENT REVENGE UPON YOU."



PAGE FIVE

Panel 1

CUT TO: A swanky Manhattan watering hole. Late afternoon. Interior. This is where all the big shots and swells get a head start on happy hour. Rich wood paneling. Plush chairs. Could this be at the Plaza? Someplace like that. Bartender in a swanky white coat with a bow tie. Cranston leans against the bar, looking suave in classy jacket and tie. Black Sparrow – now Esmeralda – stands in front of him like she's just arrived, smiling. She wears a very nice cocktail dress which offers a hint of cleavage. She has a blasé smile/smirk on her face. Cranston is looking at her but signaling the bartender (LOU) with a casually raised hand.

1 Cranston:

VIOLENT REVENGE, EH? MIND IF WE HAVE A **DRINK** FIRST?

2 Cranston:

LOU, HOW ABOUT A BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE? TWO GLASSES. BRING IT TO MY USUAL TABLE.

3 Lou:

YES, MR. CRANSTON.

Panel 2

On Cranston and Esmeralda walking side by side through the lounge/club. To either side of them we see rich people drinking and conversing. No tuxedos or ball gowns please. This is late afternoon casual drinking. But it's still a very ritzy place. Her eyes flick toward him with amusement.

4 Esmeralda:

DON'T FRET, YOU BAD MAN. MY ANGER SUBSIDED AS SOON AS MY FEET WERE ON SOLID GROUND AGAIN.

5 Esmeralda:

AS I SAID BEFORE, THESE THINGS HAPPEN IN OUR LINE OF WORK.

6 Cranston:

YOU'VE PLENTY TO ANSWER FOR, MAJOR, BUT I'LL RESTARIN MYSELF FOR THE MOMENT. I'LL ADMIT I'M INTRIGUED.

Panel 3

Cranston pulls out a chair for her to sit at his table as Lou pours champagne into two glasses.

7 Esmeralda:

CALL ME **ESMERALDA**. I RESIGNED MY COMMISSION WITH THE SOCIALISTS IN FAVOR OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

Panel 4

Two-shot. Cranston and Esmeralda sit across the table from one another, holding up glasses like maybe they are about to toast.

8 Cranston:

OBVIOUSLY YOU THINK I CAN BE OF SOME USE TO YOU. **SOCIAL** CALLS SELDOM COME THROUGH MY KITCHEN WINDOW.

9 Esmeralda:

IT SEEMED THE MOST EXPEDIENT WAY. AND YES, YOU – OR PERHAPS YOUR **ALTER EGO** – CAN HELP.

10 Esmeralda:

MAYBE YOU'VE READ ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY BREAK-IN. THAT WAS ME, I'M AFRAID.

Panel 5

On Cranston, holding up his glass and about to drink, looking bemused, a raised eyebrow.

11 Cranston:

YOU CONFESS? VERY WELL. WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME QUIETLY OR DO YOU PREFER **HANDCUFFS**?

Panel 6

On Esmeralda. A wry smile. About to drink her champagne too.

12 Esmeralda:

REALLY, DARLING, WE CAN DISCUSS **ROLEPLAY** LATER.

13 Esmeralda:

RIGHT NOW ... A STORY.

PAGE SIX

Panel 1

COLOR ALERT. We're entering flashback mode until further notice, so let's do something with the color palette to indicate this.

CUT TO: Establishing shot. A big luxury motor yacht docked among some shab-bier ships and boats. The yacht could be something like:

<http://uk.boats.com/motor-boats/mathis-yacht-building-co-llc-fantail-motor-yacht-12080524/>

1 Esmeralda/CAP: "HIS NAME WAS GUSTAV ARGUS AND HE WAS KNOWN TO THE LEGITIMATE WORLD AS AN IMPORTER AND EXPORTER.

2 Esmeralda/CAP: "EVERYONE ELSE KNEW HIM AS A BLACK MARKET DEALER OF STOLEN ANTIQUITIES AND RARE CURIOSITIES.

Panel 2

CUT TO: Interior of yacht. A fancy lounge area. We're looking at Argus who wears a double-breasted white suit. He has a fancy curly moustache and round rimmed glasses and a ruby ring on his pinky finger. Fancy middle-aged guy. Drink in one hand, smoldering cigar in the other. Behind him we see two of his thugs in dark suits standing at ease.

3 Esmeralda/CAP: "HE SUB-CONTRACTED THE MOON STONE JOB OUT TO ME. AN EASY OPPORTUNITY FOR QUICK CASH.

4 Argus: ONCE YOU HAVE THE STONE, WE'LL MEET, AND I'LL PAY YOU. I BELIEVE TEN THOUSAND WAS YOUR PRICE?

Panel 3

Reverse angle. On Black Sparrow, hands on hips, looking sassy and kick ass.

5 Black Sparrow: I SAID TWENTY. IN CASH.

6 Black Sparrow: AND WORTH EVERY PENNY.

Panel 4

Small panel on Sparrow holding the Moon Stone up to her eyes and grinning at it. It's the size of a baseball, a curious combo of diamond and pearl and has a subtle glow to it.

7 Esmeralda/CAP: "AS YOU ALREADY KNOW, THE CAPER CAME OFF WITH LITTLE TROUBLE.

Panel 5

CUT TO: Establishing shot of the Plaza Hotel in NYC.

8 Esmeralda/CAP: "I RETIRED TO MY HOTEL SUITE TO BASK IN MY ACCOMPLISHMENT ...

Panel 6

CUT TO: Interior of Sparrow's hotel suite, although we don't see much of it in this panel. Close on a note she's holding in her hand, written in a woman's penmanship. The note reads: *Black Sparrow, Do not give the Moon Stone to Argus. I will pay you triple for it. Wait to be contacted. F.*

9 Esmeralda/CAP:

" ... AND FOUND A MESSAGE WAITING.

Panel 7

On Sparrow, still holding the note. A sly smirk on her face. She's interested.

10 Esmeralda/CAP:

"I'LL ADMIT I LET **GREED** GET THE BETTER OF ME.

PAGE SEVEN

Panel 1

A wider shot of the hotel suite. Black Sparrow has stripped down to a black lacy bra and panties which barely contain her. She is lounging on a divan or maybe an easy chair with a foot rest. Next to her is a champagne bucket with an open bottle in it. She tilts her head back as she drinks champagne from a glass. Two other empty champagne bottles are visible on the floor. French doors leading out to a balcony are open and we glimpse the skyline beyond. Resting on a small pillow on a table is the moon stone. A slight subtle glow around it. The stone should be as far from Sparrow as possible yet still pictured. Her holstered pistol hangs on the back of the chair or corner of the divan or arm of the chair or whatever. As long as it is visible and within easy reach. Big-ish panel to show off the goods.

1 Esmeralda/CAP:

"I SKIPPED MY MEETING WITH ARGUS. I HAD THE MOON STONE AND COULD FIND HIM AGAIN IF I WISHED. SIMPLE ENOUGH TO MAKE UP SOME EXCUSE.

2 Esmeralda/CAP:

"I WAS MORE INTERESTED IN THE MYSTERIOUS NOTE WRITER, SO I DID AS I WAS INSTRUCTED, AND WAITED TO BE CONTACTED.

3 Esmeralda/CAP:

"AND WAITED ...

Panel 2

Three guys bust through the door of the hotel suite. Two are huge thug types with Tommy Guns. The third is a little weasel looking guy. All in gangster suits. They bust in, the door swinging open on one hinge.

4 Esmeralda/CAP:

"I WAITED TOO LONG. ARGUS'S MEN FOUND ME.

5 SFX:

KRASH

6 Esmeralda/CAP:

"I'M A **CAREFUL** WOMAN AND HAD CHECKED INTO THE HOTEL UNDER A FALSE NAME.

Panel 3

Closer on Esmeralda as she frantically twists to make a grab for her pistol.

7 Esmeralda/CAP:

"BUT A LADY CAN NEVER BE TOO CAREFUL, I GUESS.

Panel 4

The two thugs cut loose with the Tommy guns, barrels belching fire at us. The little weasel guy is reaching between them to snatch the Moon Stone off the little pillow.

8 SFX:

RATT TATT TATT TATT TATT TATT TATT



PAGE EIGHT

Panel 1

Back on Sparrow. She is doing a sort of one-handed gymnast move to spring herself off the divan/chair. Her pistol is in her other hand. The Tommy gun bullets shred the divan/chair, stuffing flying all over the place. A few of the shots pass dangerously close to Sparrow. Feel free to shoot up whatever walls or windows are in the background.

1 SFX:

RATT TATT TATT TATT TATT TATT

2 Esmeralda/CAP:

"THEY WERE GOOD ENOUGH TO CATCH ME OFF GUARD.

Panel 2

Video game POV. Looking down Sparrow's pistol arm as she fires off several rounds at the thugs who contort and spray blood and die. Behind them we get a glimpse of the weasel guy escaping back through the door.

3 SFX:

BLAMM BLAMM BLAMM BLAMM

4 Esmeralda/CAP:

"NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO LIVE THROUGH IT.

Panel 3

CUT TO: The hallway outside the suite, but we're looking back inside at Sparrow standing over the bodies, smoke leaking from the barrel of her gun. She is looking out at us in the hall, but nobody is there.

5 Esmeralda/CAP:

"BUT WITH THEIR LIVES, THEY PURCHASED THE SECONDS NEEDED FOR THE THIRD MAN TO SLIP AWAY WITH THE MOON STONE.

Panels 4-5

Closer on Sparrow, lifting the barrel of the gun to her mouth to blow away the smoke. The smoke she blows away drifts to the right and expands to form the other panel which returns us to the present and our NORMAL COLOR PALETTE. In the "smoke panel," we return to the present, a two-shot of Esmeralda and Cranston at the table. She is leaning toward him with a cigarette in her mouth. Cranston reaches to light it with a fancy gold lighter.

6 Esmeralda/CAP:

"**NOBODY** STEALS FROM THE BLACK SPARROW, SO I PLOTTED MY RETALIATION. BUT I WAS IN A STRANGE CITY. I NEEDED HELP.

7 Esmeralda/CAP:

"I NEEDED THE **SHADOW**."

8 Cranston:

SO ... TO RECAP ...

PAGE NINE

Panel 1

On Cranston, leaning back in his chair, holding his drink. The look on his face is one of somebody who is amused by an especially precocious child.

1 Cranston:

A SHADY CHARACTER HIRES YOU TO **STEAL** THE MOON STONE. YOU THEN **DOUBLE-CROSS** HIM. THEN THEY GET THE DROP ON YOU AND STEAL IT BACK.

2 Cranston:

AND **NOW** YOU'RE ASKING FOR HELP.

3 Cranston:

FROM SOMEBODY WHO'S ALREADY TRIED TO **KILL** YOU ONCE.

4 Cranston:

DID I LEAVE ANYTHING OUT?

Panel 2

Close on Esmeralda. She's holding her cigarette close to her face, so the smoke wafts up past her in a noir way. A sexy mysterious half smile on her face. Eyes blazing with inner mystery and whatnot.

5 Esmeralda:

JUST THIS.

6 Esmeralda:

ALL I WANT IS WHAT I STOLE FAIR AND SQUARE.

7 Esmeralda:

BUT **ARGUS** HAS A NETWORK OF THIEVES AND SMUGGLERS ALL UP AND DOWN THE

EAST COAST. YOU TURN A BLIND EYE TO MY MINOR INDISCRETIONS, AND I SERVE HIM AND HIS OPERATION UP ON A SILVER PLATTER.

Panel 3

Back on Cranston. He's turned his head somewhat away from us to sip his drink, but his eyes slide back to look right at us. He's considering.

8 Caption: FOR A LONG TIME NOW I'VE BEEN TWO MEN.

9 Caption: WELL, ONE MAN AND ONE SHADOW OF A MAN.

10 Caption: TOO OFTEN PEOPLE THINK THEY NEED THE ONE WHEN THEY REALLY NEED THE OTHER.

Panel 4

CUT TO: The office of a petty pencil pusher. Out of his window we can see the shipping yards and docks and boats. With one hand, he's talking on the phone. With the other hand, he has a finger on a spot to the open pages of a log book on his desk. In the background on the wall, maybe shipping and nautical charts, things like that.

11 Caption: THE BUREAUCRATS OF NEW YORK KNOW EVERYTHING REALLY. YOU JUST NEED TO KNOW WHICH ONE TO ASK. AND THE CLOUT TO GET AN ANSWER.

12 Caption: AFTER ESMERALDA GAVE ME THE NAME OF THE YACHT, THE REST WAS EASY.

13 Pencil Pusher: YES, I HAVE THE MANIFEST AND LOG FOR THE *THALIA* RIGHT HERE. SET SAIL FOR NEWPORT THIS MORNING.

14 Pencil Pusher: ONLY TOO HAPPY TO HELP, MR. CRANSTON.

Panel 5

Now we need an old-time B-movie map with dotted lines going from New York to Newport with a map icon of an airplane leading the dots.

14 Crofton: "BOSS, DO YOU REALLY NEED ME TO TELL YOU THIS IS A BAD IDEA?"

PAGE TEN

Panel 1

CUT TO: Newport Airfield. Day. Cranston's private plane is parked on the tarmac in the background. Cranston and MILES CROFTON walk toward us each carrying

a small suitcase. Their heads lean slightly toward one another as if talking low so nobody else can hear. Maybe we can work in a WELCOME TO NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND sign someplace.

- 1 Cranston: YOU DON'T THINK I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF, MILES?
- 2 Crofton: I THINK EVERY TIME YOU TURN YOUR BACK ON THAT BITCH YOU RISK GETTING A BULLET IN IT.

Panel 2
Now behind them. They are walking towards the fence/gate that leads away from the tarmac. Esmeralda is on the other side of the fence, waving over Cranston and Miles. Behind her is a parked Taxi. She is close enough that she is easily recognizable but far enough not to hear Miles and Cranston's conversation. Put her in an expensive, period-appropriate traveling dress. (Give her a very small purse or clutch and remember to show her with it occasionally.)

- 3 Cranston: MILES, I'M SURPRISED AT YOU. DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE THE SORT TO HOLD A GRUDGE.
- 4 Crofton: I LOST AN EYE OVER FRANCE. I STILL WON'T EAT A KAISER ROLL.
- 5 Esmeralda: OVER HERE, GENTLEMEN. I'VE SNAGGED US A TAXI.

Panel 3
At the Taxi. Miles is loading bags in the trunk while Cranston and Esmeralda converse.

- 6 Cranston: YOU CALLED THE MARINAS?
- 7 Esmeralda: YES. THE *THALIA* HASN'T PUT IN ANYWHERE.
- 8 Cranston: HELL. THIS MIGHT BE TOUGHER THAN I THOUGHT. THEY COULD BE ANCHORED ANYWHERE UP OR DOWN THE COAST.

Panel 4
Closer two shot. She looks up at Cranston with a knowing smirk.

- 9 Esmeralda: WHEN DID YOU BECOME SUCH A PESSIMIST, DARLING?
- 10 Cranston: I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW WHERE ARGUS AND HIS THUGS ARE?
- 11Esmeralda: NO. BUT I KNOW WHERE THEY'RE GOING TO BE.

Panel 5

A wide shot. Give us a little elevation. The taxi pulls away from the airfield and heads into town.

12 Esmeralda/CAP:

"DRIVER, TAKE US TO TOURO PARK."



PAGE ELEVEN

Panel 1

CUT TO: Touro Park. Day. Cranston and Esmeralda stand side by side looking up at something. Cranston has his hands in his pockets. Their postures and expressions are like two people looking at an abstract painting on a wall in a museum and not really getting it. In the background, we see the taxi parked on the street. The taxi driver and Crofton are there. The taxi driver is lighting Crofton's cigar.

1 Cranston:

OKAY, I'LL BITE.

2 Cranston:

WHAT IS IT?

Panel 2

Reverse angle. Standing behind them now looking up with them at the Newport Tower: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newport_Tower_\(Rhode_Island\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newport_Tower_(Rhode_Island)) Google images will provide plenty of other photo references. Let's make sure to get the scale right. Most pictures of the tower show a short wrought iron gate around it. Let's go ahead and lose that as it might be inconvenient later. Nice BIG panel. Biggest on page.

3 Esmeralda:

NEWPORT TOWER. SOME LOCALS CALL IT THE OLD STONE MILL.

4 Cranston:

WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST TELL ME WE WERE COMING HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE?

5 Esmeralda:

IT DIDN'T OCCUR TO ME IT MIGHT BE IMPORTANT UNTIL YOU MENTIONED ARGUS WAS COMING TO NEWPORT.

Panel 3

Small panel, maybe an insert. Just a two-shot of Esmeralda's and Cranston's heads talking to each other.

6 Esmeralda: I WAS READING ABOUT IT WHILE PLANNING THE HEIST. THE STONE AND THE TOWER ARE CONNECTED IN LOCAL HISTORY, BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER HOW.

7 Cranston: HMMM. TIME TO MAKE ANOTHER PHONE CALL.

PAGE TWELVE

Panel 1

CUT TO: Establishing shot. A very nice colonial style house. Night. The home of professor Edgar Jenks.

1 Caption: ALL OF US WEALTHY MEN ABOUT TOWN KNOW ONE ANOTHER, AND FOR US A PHONE CALL CAN BE MORE POWERFUL THAN A PAIR OF PISTOLS.

2 Jenks/CAP: "YOU APPEAR TO BE A WELL-CONNECTED MAN, MR. CRANSTON."

Panel 2

CUT TO: The interior of the house – a study or den of some kind. There are a few chairs and shelves with leather bound books and a globe in the corner, maps and old paintings on the wall. Important: Show at least one window (if not in this panel then later). Professor Jenks is a man in his mid-sixties wearing a cardigan sweater over a white shirt and looking like an old professor. He's at a sideboard, pouring three glasses of sherry from a decanter for himself and his guests. Cranston and Esmeralda are there also.

3 Jenks: I DON'T USUALLY SEE PEOPLE AFTER OFFICE HOURS, BUT MY DEAN TOLD ME ONE OF THE UNIVERSITY'S MORE INFLUENTIAL ALUMNI SUGGESTED I MAKE TIME FOR YOU.

4 Cranston: WE APPRECIATE IT, PROFESSOR JENKS. WE WOULDN'T HAVE DRIVEN UP FROM NEWPORT IF IT WASN'T IMPORTANT.

Panel 3

New angle. They all have their drinks now. Cranston is sipping.

5 Esmeralda: WE'VE BEEN TOLD YOU'RE THE MAN TO ASK WHEN IT COMES TO THE NEWPORT TOWER.

6 Jenks: IT'S THE REMAINS OF AN OLD WINDMILL. I HOPE THAT WAS WORTH THE DRIVE.

7 Esmeralda: BUT ISN'T THERE **ANOTHER** THEORY? ONE INVOLVING THE MOON STONE?

Panel 4

Close on Jenks. His head is turned as he brings his glass up for a drink. But he pauses, eyes coming back to us, one eyebrow raised in semi-amusement.

8 Jenks: AH HH. SO YOU WANT TO HEAR ABOUT THE **TEMPLARS**.

Panel 5

Two-shot of Cranston and Esmeralda. Her eyes slide toward Cranston, comically frowning.

9 Cranston: DO WE?

10 Esmeralda: **YES**. WE DO.

Panel 6

Jenks' face is all the way to the left of the panel. Spreading out to the right is the beginning of the flashback story he's telling. This flashback is going back much farther in time than the earlier flashback, so rather than just changing the color palette, let's make the whole thing **MONOCHROME**. In the flashback part of the panel, we see an old Templar knight on the beach with his sword and wearing armor, the symbol of the Templars on his tunic:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/10/Cross_Templar.svg

Behind him, more knights climb out of a beached longboat. Farther in the background we see the knights' anchored ship.

11 Jenks: THE **LEGEND CLAIMS** THAT AN EXPEDITION OF **TEMPLAR KNIGHTS** SET FOOT ON NORTH AMERICAN SHORES A HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE COLUMBUS.

PAGE THIRTEEN

Panel 1

Still in monochrome flashback mode. A scene on the edge of a forest with the Knights peacefully meeting with a group of Indians.

1 Jenks/CAP: "THE STORY GOES THAT THEY MET WITH A NUMBER OF INDIAN TRIBES. SOME WERE FRIENDLY.

Panel 2

Continue flashback. CUT TO: A battle scene between the Knights and a different tribe of Indians. Change their clothing or something to show they are a different tribe. NOTE: Neither tribe should be Mohawk. That tribe comes later. Swords and spears and whatnot.

2 Jenks/CAP: "OTHER TRIBES ... NOT SO MUCH.

Panel 3

Continue flashback. CUT TO: the site that would later be Touro Park but is now just woods around a clearing. In the middle of the clearing, the construction of the Newport Tower is underway. It is maybe two-thirds finished and easily recognizable. Under the supervision of the knights, Indian laborers are carrying stones to the construction site. The lead knight stands in the foreground consulting a map he's unrolled and is holding in front of him.

3 Jenks/CAP:

"ARMCHAIR HISTORIANS ARGUE ABOUT WHAT THE TEMPLARS' MISSION TO AMERICA MIGHT HAVE BEEN. THEY ALL SEEM FARFETCHED TO ME.

4 Jenks/CAP:

"BUT **MOST** AGREE THE VISITORS BUILT THE TOWER AS A MARKER, A MESSAGE FOR TEMPLARS WHO MIGHT COME AFTER THEM.

Panel 4

Continue flashback. Pull back for a view of the finished tower, but let's add some kind of simple, medieval looking roof. Something pointy and maybe simple old style wooden shingles. The setting sun is shining its light into the square window of the tower.

5 Jenks/CAP:

"BUT **THIS** WE DO KNOW. THE TOWER'S SMALLER WINDOWS LINE UP WITH SIGNIFICANT ASTRONOMICAL BODIES. CREATING SOME KIND OF **MAP** POSSIBLY.

6 Jenks/CAP:

"FURTHERMORE, WHEN THE SUN SHINES THROUGH THE WEST WINDOW AT THE SUMMER SOLSTIC, THE BEAM TARGETS A NICHE ON THE OPPOSING WALL WITHIN.

7 Jenks/CAP:

"SOME THEORIZE A SORT OF REFLECTING DEVICE IN THE NICHE. WHO KNOWS?"

Panel 5

End Flashback. CUT TO: Professor Jenks' study. He is pouring himself another sherry. Esmeralda is visible over his shoulder.

8 Esmeralda:

OR A **MOON STONE** PERHAPS?

9 Jenks:

MY DEAR GIRL, YOU CAN'T SHINE SUNLIGHT ON A **MOON STONE**. HOW INELOQUENT. NO NO NO ...

Panel 6

Small panel, very tight on Jenk's face. He has a kind of half-creepy grin on his face like he's suddenly enjoying telling this outrageous story.

10 Jenks:

YOU'D NEED MOONLIGHT.



PAGE FOURTEEN

Panel 1

Two-shot of Cranston and Esmeralda. Esmeralda looks very interested and attentive. Cranston's head is down slightly. His eyes are closed tight and his pinching the bridge of his nose between thumb and forefinger in a gesture of impatience.

1 Cranston:

AND WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Panel 2

Back on Jenks. Pouring yet another glass of sherry for himself. He is getting a little rosy cheeked.

2 Jenks:

IT'S NOT IMPORTANT. IT'S ALL BUNK.

3 Jenks:

THE STONE IS SUPPOSED TO AMPLIFY AND REFLECT MOONLIGHT, REVEALING ...
SOMETHING. A MESSAGE. A TREASURE MAP. ALL PURE FANTASY.

4 Jenks(small):

I SUPPOSE ONE MORE GLASS WOULDN'T HURT ...

Panel 3

On Esmeralda.

5 Esmeralda:

FORGIVE ME, PROFESSOR, BUT YOU SEEM TO KNOW A LOT ABOUT THESE LEGENDS FOR SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T BELIEVE THEM.

Panel 4

Wide shot of the room. Let's put some distance between Jenks and the others. Cranston and Esmeralda watch as Jenks moves across the room to gesture to a framed map hanging on the wall next to a large window. (More about the map later.)

6 Jenks: IN FACT, I'M WRITING A BOOK DEBUNKING A MYRIAD OF RHODE ISLAND FOLK TALES AND LEGENDS. THE LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS SPONSORING ME.

7 Jenks: THEY GAVE ME THIS MAP AS A TOKEN OF ESTEEM.

Panel 5

On the framed map. We see Jenks' hand touching the corner of the frame as if absently straitening it. The map itself looks old, maybe on parchment. A river, a forest, some hills, but nothing labeled like a town. In the upper part of the map and off to the right is a red Templar cross ... marking the spot!

8 Jenks/Off: IT DATES BACK TO 1770 AND WAS RECENTLY DISCOVERED AT AN ESTATE SALE. AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE ARE NO TOWNS OR LANDMARKS, SO IT'S REALLY QUITE USELESS.

9 Jenks/Off: BUT IT HAS THE MARK OF THE **TEMPLAR** ON IT, AND THE SOCIETY THOUGHT I MIGHT BE AMUSED.

Panel 6

Jenks turns back to face us, the map still visible over his shoulder and also some of the big window to the side.

10 Jenks: A NUMBER OF PEOPLE HAVE OFFERED TO BUY IT, BUT AS I TOLD THE YOUNG GENTLEMAN THIS AFTERNOON, I HAVE NO INTENTION OF SELLING. GROWN RATHER FOND OF IT ACTUALLY.

PAGE FIFTEEN

Panel 1

On Cranston and Esmeralda suddenly looking interested and concerned.

1 Cranston: SOMEBODY ELSE?

2 Esmeralda: WHO WAS IT?

Panel 2

Back on Jenks. He is standing somewhat in front of the window now but NOT blocking the window. We should still be able to see what's out there. At the moment it's just the blur of a street lamp across the road.

3 Jenks: DIDN'T I MENTION HIM? HOW SILLY OF ME. I THOUGHT MAYBE HE WAS WITH YOU IN SOME WAY SINCE HE WAS **ALSO** ASKING ABOUT THE **TEMPLARS**.

Panel 3

Same shot, but we see the dark, vague blur of somebody in the window. Jenks is gesturing as he talks, spilling a little sherry from his glass – but not TOO comically.

4 Jenks:

A YOUNG INDIAN FELLOW FROM ONE OF THE NEARBY TRIBES, I THINK.

5 Jenks:

FUNNY THING, REALLY, SINCE THE MOON STONE LEGEND HAS A **CONNECTION** BETWEEN THE TEMPLARS AND A LOCAL TRIBE OF –

Panel 4

Same shot. The silhouette in the window is much more clearly now the outline of a large dude. We get the smallest hint of the man's face in the flash of muzzle fire from the gunshot. The gunshot punches a hole in the glass and the bullet comes out of Jenks's chest with a spray of blood. Jenks's eyes go wide and his mouth falls open.

6 SFX:

BLAMM

Panel 5

Floor level. In the foreground, Jenks' dead body falls, the side of his face hitting the floor hard, his eyes rolling up. In the background, Cranston and Esmeralda look on with alarm.

7 SFX:

FUMP

8 Esmeralda:

OH, \$#!+!!

PAGE SIXTEEN

Panel 1

BIG panel. A REALLY BIG guy comes flying through the window, scattering glass and basically making a hell of an entrance. He is a Mohawk Indian and his name is Akash. He wears a cheap brown tweed-ish sports jacket and slacks. But no tie. Instead his collar is open, revealing a bit of Indian jewelry, some kind of choker maybe. He also has an earring in one ear, a small dream-catcher. His face looks tough and rugged. He has the tribal Mohawk haircut, but not a crazy punk rocker Mohawk, but rather a more subdued Native American version. He holds a revolver in one hand. Again, big panel.

1 SFX:

KRASH

Panel 2

Now that he's inside, we see what Akash wants. He's grabbing the map off the wall with one hand, blazing away with the revolver with the other hand. Muzzle flashes all dramatic and whatnot.

2 SFX:

BLAMM BLAMM

Panel 3

Pan around to see Cranston diving behind a chair. I don't know if there is a cool way to do this, but try not to make him look too clumsy or anything. A bullet flies but misses him ... maybe breaks a lamp or something.

3 SFX:

BLAMM



PAGE SEVENTEEN

Panel 1

On Esmeralda. She flinches and dodges to the side a step as bullets fly past her and wreck whatever is behind her. As she dodges, she reaches into her purse/clutch. Her face looks hard and pissed.

1 SFX:

BLAMM BLAMM

2 Esmeralda:

BASTARDO!

Panel 2

Small panel. Maybe an insert of the above. Your call. Close on Esmeralda's hand coming out of the purse/clutch with this single-shot Derringer: http://www.rock-islandauction.com/photos/51/p_standard/VLP41-L-F2C-H.jpg
She is cocking back the hammer with a thumb as she pulls it out.

3 SFX:

ka-klik

Panel 3

Pull out for wider shot of Esmeralda. Her arm is straight out, aiming the Derringer. A little burp of fire coming out the barrel as she squeezes the trigger. She has a slight snarl on her face, eyes narrow.

4 Esmeralda:

HOLD STILL FOR MAMA, HIJO DE PERRA!

5 SFX:

POP

Panel 4

Back on Akash. He's halfway back out the window with the framed map under his arm. Esmeralda's shot hits him on top of his shoulder with a spray of blood. His face grimaces in pain.

6 Akash:

>GAH!<

Panel 5

CUT TO: Outside. In the foreground, Akash races past us on a motorcycle. Maybe something like: <http://www.bikeexif.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/crocker-motorcycle.jpg>

In the back ground, we see Esmeralda and Cranston at the window, watching him go.

7 SFX:

VVVVRRROOOOOOMMM

8 Esmeralda:

HE'S GETTING AWAY!

9 Cranston:

NEVER MIND. WE KNOW WHERE HE'LL GO.

Panel 6

Small panel. Tight on Cranston's face. He's expression is hard, eyes intense.

10 Caption:

EVENTUALLY, THERE COMES A TIME WHEN
THE MAN HAS TO SIT, AND THE SHADOW
COMES IN OFF THE BENCH.

PAGE EIGHTEEN

Okay, I want the first five panels on this page to be a quick back and forth montage kinda thing.

Panel 1

CUT TO: The interior of a hotel room, but don't worry about that. The focus is not on the room. Shadow puts on his trademark coat. But we don't see his face. We just focus on his hands buckling his trench coat belt or whatever it's called.

1 Caption:

I'LL LEVEL WITH YOU. I'M NERVOUS
EVERY TIME, JUST FOR A SPLIT-SECOND.
NOT MUCH.

Panel 2

CUT TO: Another room ... again the room doesn't matter. Just letting you know it's a different location. Black Sparrow pulls on one of her boots. Again, just focus on the leg and hands and boots.

Panel 3

CUT TO: A belt to shoulders view of Shadow. One of his pistols is in the holster. He's holding the other pistol and slapping in a fresh magazine with the palm of his hand.

2 SFX:

CHIK

3 Caption:

THE NOTION THAT THE MAN ISN'T GOOD
ENOUGH RUBS ME THE WRONG WAY.

Panel 4

CUTTO: On Black Sparrow's hands as she fastens her gun belt. Her coiled whip hangs from the belt also.

Panel 5

CUT TO: Shadow puts on his hat. But his head is down. We don't see the face.

4 Caption:

BUT WHEN CRANSTON TAKES YIELDS,
AND I'M FULLY HIM, THE MAN IN THE HAT,
I CAN FEEL IT'S RIGHT. I WONDER HOW I
COULD EVER BE SATISFIED JUST BEING A
GLIB, GIN-SWILLING MAN ABOUT TOWN.

Panel 6

CUT TO: A rooftop. Night. Black Sparrow is partially turned away from us, but turns back to smile warmly at us, like she's been waiting for us to come along.

5 Caption:

AND THAT THOUGHT MAKES ME NERVOUS
TOO.

6 Black Sparrow:

THERE YOU ARE, DARLING.

7 Black Sparrow:

SUCH A BAD MAN TO KEEP A LADY WAITING.

PAGE NINETEEN

Panel 1

CUT TO: A rooftop in Newport. Night. This is a VERY BIG panel. The payoff we've been waiting for. Two cool costumes ready for action. The moon is big and full and low and close in the background. Shadow stands tall and proud and kick-ass looking. Black Sparrow looks sleek and graceful and sexy in her costume. She is moving close to Shadow, her hand coming up like she is about to caress his face.

1 Black Sparrow:

THIS IS HOW IT SHOULD BE. THE TWO OF
US TOGETHER. THE LORD AND LADY OF
THE NIGHT.

2 Black Sparrow:

DON'T TELL ME THAT BIT OF FLUFF I
FOUND IN YOUR KITCHEN COULD EVER
MAKE YOU HAPPY LIKE I COULD.

Panel 2

Closer two-shot of Shadow and Sparrow. Shadow grabs the wrist of the hand Sparrow was about to caress him with. (Wow. What a lousy sentence.) He twists slightly as he moves her hand away from his face. She grimaces, showing teeth, eyes flashing anger.

3 Shadow:

MY HAPPINESS IS NONE OF YOUR CONCERN. YOU AND I WILL SETTLE ACCOUNTS SOON ENOUGH.

4 Caption:

IT WAS ALWAYS CRANSTON WHO WAS THE FLIRT, THE PLAYBOY, QUICK WITH A WINK AND A QUIP.

5 Caption:

THE SHADOW IS MORE DIRECT. LESS FORGIVING. CLARITY OF PURPOSE IS HIS STRENGTH.

Panel 3

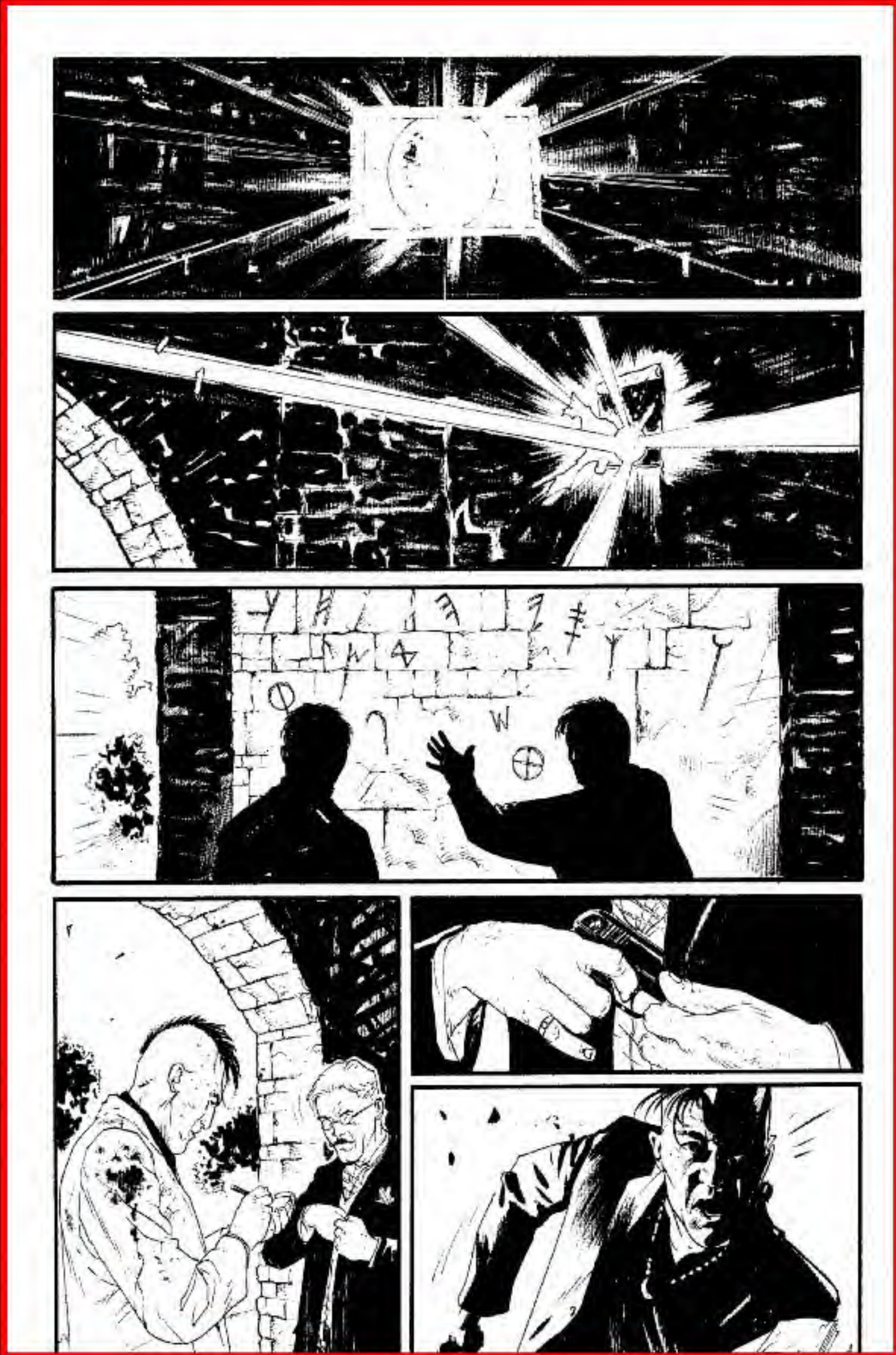
On Black Sparrow. She's pulling back, rubbing her wrist, mouth tight, eyes narrow.

6 Caption:

AND YET A SMALL, DARK , UGLY PART OF ME WORRIES SHE'S RIGHT.

7 Akash/CAP:

"GUSTAV ARGUS, SHOW YOURSELF!"



PAGE TWENTY

Panel 1

CUT TO: The Newport Tower. We're outside the tower, but we can see the dark figures of two men inside. Off to the side, we see Akash's parked motorcycle. One of the dark figures is Akash shaped. The other is Gustav Argus shaped.

1 Argus:

RIGHT HERE, AKASH. AND ALONE AS INSTRUCTED.

2 Akash:

YOU BROUGHT THE STONE?

Panel 2

CUT TO: Within the tower. It's night, but a combination of street lamps and moon-

light makes it easy enough to see what's going on. On Argus. He's holding up a small canvas bag.

3 Argus: YOU GET THE MOON STONE, IF YOU HAVE THE MONEY. THIS LITTLE ITEM WAS NOT AS EASY TO COME BY AS PREDICTED.

4 Argus: YOU LOOK LIKE HELL, AKASH. WHAT HAPPENED?

Panel 3

On Akash. He looks sweaty and a bit green, lost a lot of blood. He has one hand grasping his shot shoulder, but the bloodstain on his shirt and jacket is clearly visible. He's in bad shape. His other hand is out, palm up. He wants the Moon Stone.

5 Akash: NEVER MIND ... ME. I'M F-FINE.

6 Akash: JUST HAND OVER ... THE DAMN ... STONE. I NEED TO M-MAKE SURE IT'S ... THE REAL THING.

Panel 4

Two-shot. Argus hands the stone to Akash.

7 Argus: TWO OF MY MEN DIED GETTING THIS THING. I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHY IT'S SO IMPORTANT.

8 Akash: I'LL SHOW YOU.

Panel 5

There is a large stone block under a niche high up on the wall. Sorta like an altar but nothing too garish. There is no actual thing in the real tower, so keep it low key. Anyway ... Akash has climbed up on this block so he can reach over his head to slide the Moon Stone into the niche.

9 Akash: CENTURIES AGO, THE TEMPLARS MADE A PROMISE TO MY PEOPLE.

10 Akash: THE MOON STONE IS THE KEY TO UNLOCKING THAT PROMISE.

PAGE TWENTY-ONE

Panel 1

CUT TO: Outside. A wide shot. Far enough back to see the moon shining down into the little window of the tower.

1 Akash/CAP: "WHEN THE MOON BEAMS HIT THE STONE ..."

Panel 2

CUT TO: Back inside the Tower. The moon beams come through the square win-

dow and zap across the interior of the tower to hit the Moon Stone in the niche. Smaller beams reflect out from the stone to fill the room.

2 Akash/Off: ... IT REFLECTS, REDIRECTS, AND BATHES THE INTERIOR OF THE TOWER IN MOONLIGHT.

Panel 3

Behind Argus and Akash. They are both looking up to what is happening high up on the side of the tower wall. Glowing runes are becoming visible in the wash of moonlight. Use some of these random symbols: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-Jg7SjUKdM_U/TlwSfk2NUdl/AAAAAAAAAGag/7dNK3h883QE/s1600/phoenician-runes.jpg

Try to give the impression that the runes are just beginning to form and there are more that we don't see continuing to form beyond this panel.

3 Akash: UP THERE!

4 Akash: THE BUILDERS WORKED **SHARDS** OF MOON STONE INTO THE MUNDANE STONework TO CATCH THE LIGHT AND REVEAL THE MESSAGE.

Panel 4

Bring us around the front of the two men. We're looking at Akash. He's scribbling frantically in the notebook, his eyes still looking up. He is smiling weakly. He's still in a bad way but happy to be so close to solving the mystery. Over his shoulder, we see Argus also still looking up at the runes, his mouth hanging open in surprise.

5 Akash: YES, YES ... AT LAST, THE **FINAL** PIECE OF THE PUZZLE.

6 Argus: MY GOD. IT'S SOME SORT OF **TREASURE** MAP, ISN'T IT?

7 Akash: SOMETHING LIKE THAT, YES.

Panel 5

Close on Argus's hand coming out of his jacket with a small, silver automatic pistol. Maybe something like:

http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_6PbD56mSkS8/TlgWTWmt9WI/AAAAAAAAABTQ/HJEInMFstPQ/s1600/europellets2.jpg

8 Argus/Off: THAT'S ALL I NEEDED TO KNOW.

Panel 6

Akash is turning, seeing what Argus is doing. He drops the notepad and pencil and fumbles frantically to pull his own revolver.

9 Akash: WHAT THE – ?!

PAGE TWENTY-TWO

Panel 1

Akash and Argus face each other, arms straight out, guns in each other's faces. Akash is still looking shaky but he manages to keep his revolver up.

1 Akash: OKAY, IF YOU PULL THE TRIGGER, THEN SO DO I?

2 Akash: I THINK WE'RE AT A **STALEMATE**, FRIEND.

3 Argus: I SUPPOSE THAT WOULD BE TRUE. EXCEPT FOR ONE THING.

Panel 2

Looking down Argus's gun arm at Akash, but we ease the camera a bit to the left to see two thugs suddenly appear in one of the tower's archways. Akash's eyes slide to the left. One thug holds a pistol. The other has a pump shotgun and is pumping in a shell.

4 Argus: I HAVE MORE TRIGGERS TO PULL THAN YOU DO.

5 SFX: *SHLUK-SHLAK*

Panel 3

Same shot, but now we ease the camera a bit to the right. Two more thugs fill the archway on that side, one with a pistol and one with a Tommy Gun. Akash's eyes slide that way now. His facial expression indicates he is realizing he might be fucked.

5 Argus: WHEN THE BLACK SPARROW DOUBLE-CROSSED ME, I **SUSPECTED** THERE MIGHT BE MORE TO THE STORY.

Panel 4

On Argus, pointing the gun at us. Over his shoulder we see another thug just outside of one of the other archways. (So yeah, we get that surrounded feeling now.) The thug holds another Tommy Gun.

6 Argus: NOW, I'LL TAKE THE STONE AND WHATEVER ELSE I NEED TO FIND THIS TREASURE.

7 Argus: IF I WERE **YOU**, AKASH, I'D DROP THE GUN AND FIGURE OUT A WAY TO BE USEFUL.

Panel 5

Same shot, but now Argus is half-shrugging and smirking at us as he still points the gun at us. In the background, we see the thug drop his Tommy Gun as a length bullwhip shoots down from above and wraps around his neck. The thugs

hands come up to uselessly paw at the whip around his neck.

8 Argus:

MAYBE IF YOU TRANSLATE THESE
SCRIBBLES FOR ME, I COULD SEE MY WAY
CLEAR TO PATCH YOU UP. MAYBE EVEN
CUT YOU IN FOR A TOKEN PERCENTAGE OF
WHATEVER WE FIND.

9 Thug(small):

>ACK<

Panel 6

Same shot as above, but Argus's eyes go wide as he starts to turn his head. We only see the thugs legs now as he's yanked up out of sight.

10 Thug/Off:

>AAIIIIEEEEEE<

11 Argus:

WHAT THE F—?!



PAGE TWENTY-THREE

Panel 1

BIG, garish panel! The Shadow drops down from above, his cape spread out and looking awesome, fire in his eyes. He lands in between Argus and Akash, bringing down a pistol butt on the back of each of their skulls, knocking them for a loop.

1 SFX:

WHAP

2 Argus:

>NNGGHH<

3 Akash:

>UHMMMPH<

Note: Next couple of pages are going to be action heavy. We have an interesting space here with this tower: http://news.beloblog.com/ProJo_Blogs/architecture-hereandthere/egantower.jpg

Being “inside” the tower and “outside” the tower is often a matter of just a few steps. So some panels could be outside the tower looking in, or inside looking out. I’ll suggest the basics as we go along, but feel free to stage things as you think will make them look the most super-fly awesome. However you stage things, just make sure Black Sparrow and Shadow are both INSIDE the tower by the top of page 25.

Panel 2

The other thug with a Tommy Gun sprays the interior of the tower with bullets, and Shadow dives underneath the shots, a few maybe piercing his fluttering cape. Let’s wash the interior of the tower in muzzle flash.

4 SFX: *RATT-TATT-TATT-TATT-TATT-TATT-TATT*

Panel 3

Shadow comes up on one knee and blazes away at the thug with both of his auto-matics. Fire spouting from the barrels. The thug contorts and sprays blood.

5 SFX: *BLAMM BLAMM BLAMM BLAMM*

Panel 4

The thug with the shotgun lifts it and aims.

6 Thug: TRY A FACE FULL OF BUCKSHOT, YOU SON OF A –

PAGE TWENTY-FOUR

Panel 1

The bullwhip wraps around the barrel of the shotgun, yanking it up as it goes off. The thug looks surprised.

1 SFX: *THIP-THIP*

2 SFX: *POOM*

Panel 2

On Black Sparrow. With one hand she is yanking back strongly on the whip. Her other hand is out to catch the shotgun flying toward her.

3 Black Sparrow: THAT LOOKS FUN. MIND IF I TRY?

Panel 3

Small panel, close on Sparrow’s hands pumping another shell into the shotgun.

4 SFX: *SHLUK-SHLAK*

Panel 4

Black Sparrow blasts the guy to hell with the shotgun. Blood!

5 SFX: *POOM*

Panel 5

Another small panel of her pumping in a new shell, the old one ejecting. These “pump in a shell” panels can be very small or inserts or whatever. Just trying to suggest a quick cinematic rhythm of her firing, pumping, firing, etc.

6 SFX:

SHLUK-SHLAK

Panel 6

She whips the shotgun around to blast another thug coming at her from a different direction.

7 SFX:

POOM

PAGE TWENTY-FIVE

Panel 1

Another very small “pumping a shell” panel.

1 SFX:

SHLUK-SHLAK

Panel 2

Wide shot. The final thug flying through the air, trailing an arc of blood.

2 SFX:

POOM

Panel 3

On Black Sparrow. She’s looking down at the shotgun in her hands with a grin. Smoke leaks from the barrel. (Reminder, we should be inside the Tower by now.)

3 Black Sparrow:

OH MY. I DO BELIEVE I NEED TO ADD ONE OF THESE TO MY CHRISTMAS LIST.

Panel 4

Behind her now. She turns to look at us over her shoulder, the grin dropping from her face. A gloved hand holding an automatic comes in from the side of the panel to point at her head. The Shadow’s hand and one of his pistols. He thumbs back the pistol’s hammer. All we see of the Shadow is the hand and the gun.

4 SFX:

ka-klik

Panel 5

Reverse angle. Looking at Shadow, pointing his pistol at us and looking badass.

5 Shadow:

NICE SHOOTING.

6 Shadow:

NOW DROP IT.



PAGE TWENTY-SIX

Panel 1
They face each other, Black Sparrow casually tossing aside the shotgun. He’s still pointing a pistol at her.

- 1 Black Sparrow:

WHAT IS THIS? I THOUGHT WE HAD AN AGREEMENT.
- 2 Shadow:

YOU PROPOSED AN AGREEMENT. I LET YOU THINK WHAT YOU WANTED.
- 3 Shadow:

AFTER ALL YOU’VE DONE, YOU DON’T REALLY THINK I’LL LET YOU JUST WALK AWAY AND –

Panel 2
A smoke grenade comes flying though the Tower’s little square window, trialing gray smoke. Something like:
<http://gunshowgoods.com/zencart/images/M18%20Smoke%20Grenade.JPG>

- 4 SFX:

FSSSSSSSS

Panel 3
The grenade lands between Sparrow and Shadow. Smoke rising around them. Shadow looks down at the grenade, distracted for a second.

- 5 SFX:

FSSSSSSS

Panel 4
Zoom in a bit. Sparrow knocks the gun out of Shadow’s hand with a backhand swipe. Smoke is thicker.

6 SFX: *SWAP*

7 Caption: IT'S ONLY A **SECOND'S** DISTRACTION.

Panel 5

Now the smoke is so thick that we only see silhouettes, although we can clearly see Sparrow doing a martial arts leg sweep on Shadow, upending him.

8 Caption: AN **ETERNITY** FOR SOMEONE WITH HER SKILLS.

9 SFX: *SWUP*

Panel 6

Small panel. Amid the smoke, Sparrow's hand reaches down to pluck Akash's notebook from the ground.

PAGE TWENTY-SEVEN

Panel 1

On Shadow as he emerges from the Tower, both guns up and ready, smoke billowing out around him. He's turning his head side-to-side, obviously searching for Sparrow.

1 Caption: THE BOX SCORE WILL READ A **WIN** FOR THE SHADOW.

Panel 2

CUT TO: On an unconscious Akash. The smoke is clearing.

2 Caption: **MURDERER APPREHENDED.**

Panel 3

CUT TO: On an unconscious Argus. Smoke almost completely gone now.

3 Caption: **SMUGGLER FOILED.**

Panel 4

CUT TO: The glowing moon stone in the niche. No smoke at all now.

4 Caption: **STOLEN PROPERTY RECOVERED.**

Panel 5

CUT TO: The roof of a nearby building. Maybe 5 or 6 stories up. We are standing behind Black Sparrow, looking down with her at the tower where there is now an ambulance parked and 3-4 police cars, lights blinking, etc.

5 Caption: SO WHY DO I HEAR FATE LAUGHING AT ME AGAIN?

6 Miss Fury/Off: I SENT YOU A LETTER ASKING YOU TO WAIT. BUT I **GUESS** I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR BEING IMPATIENT.

PAGE TWENTY-EIGHT

Note: This page is basically a Splash. But the first and third panels can be very small inserts.

Panel 1

Very close on Sparrow, turning to look at us, surprised.

1 Sparrow: WHAT --?

2 Sparrow: WHO ARE YOU?

Panel 2

BIG BIG panel ... basically a splash. We want to show both Miss Fury and Black Sparrow in all their sexy bad-ass splendor. So arrange them on the rooftop, facing each other in whatever way is super cool.

3 Miss Fury: HOPE YOU DON'T MIND THAT I TOSSED
THAT LITTLE SMOKE BOMB IN THERE, BUT
IT LOOKED LIKE YOU WERE IN A TIGHT
SPOT.

4 Miss Fury: OH, THEY CALL ME MISS FURY BY THE
WAY.

Panel 3

Small insert panel down in the bottom right corner. On a wildly grinning Miss Fury.

5 Miss Fury: AND I HAVE A BUSINESS PROPOSITION
THAT MIGHT INTEREST YOU.

To be continued ...

NOIR
ARTIST SKETCHES
by ANDREA MUTTI







MINERVA



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ORLANDO ARGUS













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